

Memories of Lord Cline
vol. 2

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manuscripts in my possession that, though a pleasant and respectable gentleman, Captain Maskelyne had little talent as an officer. His conduct to part of the Nabob's family, while commanding at Arcot, had been severely condemned by Mr. Pigot. We find amongst his letters to his brother-in-law an indignant remonstrance against the treatment he had met with from the Governor, who also wrote Clive fully upon the subject. The latter in his reply* to Mr. Pigot states the great uneasiness which the circumstance had caused him, but adds, that he derived consolation from the belief, that it entirely proceeded from an error of judgment. This instance, added to others, proves that, though the title to Clive's regard rested more upon the heart than the head of the individual by whom it was possessed, yet he was rigid in his principle of never nominating any one to public station whose qualities did not fit him to perform its duties. He regretted, as is shown by his letters, that Captain Maskelyne did not accompany him to Bengal, as a member of his family; but, instead of appointing him to one of the many high and lucrative stations he had in his gift, he recommended him to go to England, and added to his small means what he

* 25th of December, 1757.

deemed necessary to place him in independence *: and we are amused with the following passage, in a letter † from Clive to his father:—
“ My brother-in-law, Captain Maskelyne, goes by this conveyance, and will bring you this: he is worth 10,000*l.* or 11,000*l.* I beg you will assist in settling him in the world, and in getting him a good wife.”

In the same letter he observes, “ Should you have occasion for money to purchase commissions for my brothers, or to answer any other purpose that may be for their advantage, you will apply to my attorneys, who I desire may supply you accordingly.”

The letter ‡ from Mr. Clive to his son, acknowledging the receipt of the accounts of his success, commences with one of those simple but natural bursts of paternal affection that mock all imitation.

“ Your last letter,” he says, “ gave me joy beyond all possibility of expression. The whole kingdom is in transports for the glory and success their countryman has gained. Come away, and let us rejoice together!”

* I have not been able to ascertain the exact amount Clive gave Captain Maskelyne, but judge it must have been considerable from a passage in one of his letters.

† 29th of December, 1758.

‡ 23d of March, 1758.

In a subsequent letter, he dwells with true paternal feeling upon the same subject.

“ May Heaven,” he writes*, “ preserve you safe to Old England, where not only your friends and relations, but strangers who never saw you, will congratulate you for the glorious actions you have done your country. With what joy shall I embrace you ! Oh, may I live to see that day ! Your mother and sisters are sitting with me round the fire, drinking to your health and safe voyage.”

Mr. Clive appears, from his own statement, to have been involved in his circumstances, and to have felt much distress in becoming such a burden to his son. In his answer to the letter which informed him of Clive’s agents being directed to give him the additional sum of 500*l.* per annum, and to keep a coach for him, he observes†, “ I have received your letter of the 9th of November, 1758, and am under the greatest obligations that ever father was to a son, especially in the unhappy circumstances my own imprudence and being bound for others hath rendered me. Mr. Woolaston, for whom I was surety, is now dead ; and what he owed the government, together with what remained unpaid on my account, amount to no less than

* 23d of December, 1758.

† 29th of July, 1759.

9000*l.* more than we have to pay. The Treasury, by direction of the Duke of Newcastle, have postponed the payment to a future day; but I fear that day will come before you arrive in England; and when you come, what pretence have I to expect or desire you should set me free, when I have already had your benevolence in so extraordinary a manner? Thank God you have so much in your power! Let us live on a fifth part of what you have so generously allowed me. If I am free, I shall be content; and, while I live, bless Providence, and pray for the increase of your happiness, who have saved a distressed family from utter ruin.”

The letters from Clive’s mother breathe the truest maternal affection. Her warmest gratitude is expressed for that comfort which he has diffused throughout all his family, and above all, as the old lady states, for his great kindness to “her girls.”

The greater part of the letters from Clive’s mother and sisters, subsequent to his marriage, are addressed to Mrs. Clive, but docketed by himself, and placed among his own papers; a proof of the value he attached to the feelings which they expressed. They contain the common topics of such correspondence, marked with a feeling of the warmest affection for one who, amid all his public avocations, was continually

affording them proofs of his love and attachment. Towards Mrs. Clive there appears to have been but one sentiment throughout the family : all speak of her constant attention and kindness with gratitude, and appear to rejoice as much in their brother's happiness in the married state, as in the other instances of his good fortune.

Besides occasional acts of generosity, Clive continued incessant in his endeavours to render happy, by his regard and attention, every branch of his family, however distant. In this he was wholly disinterested, for none of them (except, perhaps, Sir Edward Clive) were in a situation to afford him the slightest aid ; but they gave him, what he more valued, their gratitude and affection.

The impressions produced by his conduct towards every one with whom he was connected cannot be better shown than by inserting some short extracts from the entertaining letters of one of his female cousins * to Mrs. Clive in India.

“ I don't know what title I must give you now †, but I am sure I may say, ‘ To the agreeable Mrs. Clive.’ I have always wrote whenever I heard the ships sailed, and by Captain Tully and Mr. King. Ill fate for you and me, that so many

* Miss Sarah Clive.

† 26th of December, 1758.

fine thoughts should be sent to the bottom of the sea! Neptune will be quite entertained. As to the name of Clive above ground, the Colonel has made it so famous, that it is the only comfort I have in still being a Clive. * * * * * He is in the highest esteem in this part of the world, and does honour to all his relations. * * * * Your father, my cousin Clive, dined with us yesterday, and read, or tried to read, one of the Colonel's letters; but his joy, with tenderness at the thoughts of such a son, made him burst twice into tears before he could go on. Is it to be wondered at? for sure it must be a pleasure so great, the strongest mind must be greatly affected. Well, I sincerely wish you all safe on your native shore, with your bags of money, and bushels of diamonds; with the Eastern Prince the Colonel is so good as to say he will get for me. I can't possibly refuse him. I have a taste to be a princess. As to Captain Clack, you are so good to think of for me, if this Prince don't care to take so long a voyage, don't leave the Captain behind. The war makes men very scarce. He shall talk for ever, and I for ever have patience. I have been in town a fortnight, at two plays; one, a new tragedy somewhat resembling the story of *The Children in the Wood*. Did you ever read that old ballad? Garrick is in as

much vogue as ever ; operas at a low ebb. I suppose you are a complete mistress of harmony.

“ I hope you will never receive this letter : not that I don’t think it very clever ; but I wish the Colonel and all his family may be in a ship, the sails filled with most prosperous gales, that will, soon as possible ; send you safe to your own country and friends ; one of whom I hope ever to be styled, which will always be a pleasure to your sincere and affectionate cousin.”

We meet the following passage in another letter from this lady, which appears to have been written about the same period (for, like many ladies’ letters, it has no date.)

“ I have a thousand things to say to you, and but a moment’s time. I find the bearer of this is a painter ; hope the Colonel and you will let him take your pictures. I should be glad of them in miniature. I begin to fear the Colonel will not bring me the Eastern Prince till it is too late : the bushel of diamonds runs strangely in my head. Fanny is going to enter into the happy state of matrimony. I have seen the lover : upon my word, a pretty, cherry-cheeked, agreeable young counsellor. I hear he is called to the bar, and will have 500*l.* a year. I wish I had been the Colonel’s sister ; not to detract from them ; certainly he is a great advantage to his family ; and I believe, after my aunts and

myself, that horrid name of old maid will be extirpated out of the house of Clive.

“I have still a thousand things to say. Apelles is arrived, and must have this letter: I don’t know, but it may be of service to him, his occasioning me to release you. Well, a little more. All diversions go on as usual; a gloomy town — general mourning for the Princess of Orange; the linen that is worn is crape, as yellow as saffron, and what they call Turkey gauze, that looks like sarcenet: a sketch that the world is as ridiculous as ever. A most elegant ball at Lord Sandwich’s! I must not say any more, only beg my respects and most sincere love to the Colonel. I wish for your speedy return to England. Pray my love to cousin George, who I would write to had I a moment, but will in the next ship.”

Clive had appointed several of his relations and friends joint agents in England; and he was very fortunate in having his near connexion, Sir Edward Clive, Bart. (a Judge of circuit), as one of them. It appears to have required all that gentleman’s strictness to prevent his relation suffering from the bad choice he had made of one of his men of business.

“One of your attorneys,” Sir Edward remarks *, “is a man I never can, and never shall,

* Letter to Clive, 24th of December, 1759.

accord with. I have several things to reveal to you when you come home. I believe, in order to take care of your interest, and (as I think) to protect your property, I must file a bill in Chancery. When you arrive, you shall have an account of it: I don't think any labour troublesome to serve you, but assure you (and Mr. King knows it) I have had a great deal.

“ It is a great pleasure,” adds this respectable Judge, “ to know that, considering your father and his large family, God Almighty has put it into your mind, as well as your power, to make him and them happy. Assisting a parent must be the most agreeable sensation to good hearts. I happened, in a small way, to have that happy opportunity. I call it happy, and it affords me many agreeable reflections.”

A few months after Clive sailed for India, his eldest sister* married Sir James Markham, Bart. ; and when he returned, he found that three more had entered the matrimonial state, being much indebted (if we are to believe their sprightly cousin already noticed) for their happy settlement to the good fortune of having an Indian Colonel for their brother.

Clive never forgot those to whom he was

* Lady Markham is still alive, and, although upwards of ninety, in the enjoyment of all her faculties.

in any degree indebted for his advancement. Several of his letters are addressed to Mr. Chauncey, a gentleman who, though then retired, had, at one period, taken a very active part in Indian affairs. In one of these letters*, after communicating to him the peace with Suraj-u-Dowlah, Clive observes, “ If I have been in any way instrumental in the late revolution, the merit is entirely owing to you, who countenanced, favoured, and protected me, and was the chief cause of my coming to India in a station which rendered me capable of serving the Company. Accept, Sir, of my gratitude, and sincerest wishes for your welfare. May you enjoy the blessings of peace and retirement, and may success and every other happiness in this life forsake me, when I forget how much I am obliged to you ! ”

er a sense of gratitude had more value from being expressed in the moment of victory, and from being addressed to an individual who had no longer any power of promoting his views. I notice such facts, not only because they are the truest indications of character, but as they account for the zeal and attachment which Clive's numerous and respectable friends displayed on many trying occasions. Neither his wealth nor his fame could have inspired such feelings.

* 23d of February, 1757.

Sincerity and warmth of heart alone can kindle corresponding sentiments in honourable minds.

Of Clive's friends in India I have already spoken. His ties with them had been formed in the course of public service, and remained unbroken, except in the rare cases, where he thought individuals parted from those principles of action upon which his esteem was founded. His deep and affectionate gratitude towards Colonel Lawrence has been mentioned. His friendship for Mr. Pigot remained unchanged: not so that for Mr. Orme. We find in one of his father's letters an observation upon his being reconciled to that gentleman on his return to India in 1755. Mr. Clive expresses his hope, in this letter, that Mr. Orme's History would be speedily published, as the objections * on account of Mr. Chauncey were at an end.

Clive, though his experience had rendered him singularly well acquainted with the character of all classes of the natives of India, was very little, if at all, versed in the languages of that country; but he appears not only to have been most solicitous to avail himself of the aid of those who had this advantage, but, when he found the acquirement accompanied by integrity and talent,

* What these objections were, or the cause of their termination, is not explained; but Mr. Clive's letter proves that the first part of the history was written before 1755

to recommend them, and place them in the highest stations in the service. His notice and patronage of Mr. Watts, Mr. Vansittart, and Mr. Hastings, afford ample proof of this fact; and, on almost all occasions, public and private, when he brings forward the names of those individuals, he adds some observations on the great advantages they enjoy over others, from their knowledge of the languages, the manners, and the habits of the people of India.

During his expedition to Bengal, Clive had only one of his relations in his family, Mr. George Clive, for whom he cherished a very sincere affection. The two persons to whom he appears to have been most attached were Mr. Walsh and Mr. Luke Scrafton, both civil servants of the Company, whose names have been frequently mentioned in the course of the narrative. They continued through life in habits of the strictest intimacy with their friend and patron. Of Mr. Walsh, Clive never speaks without expressing great respect for his character; and of his regard for Mr. Scrafton, whose lively disposition suited his own, we have many proofs. Bad health obliging that gentleman to go to Madras, Clive wrote by him to Sir George Pocock, in a style which evinced his kind and anxious solicitude.

“The bearer of this*,” he observes, “Mr.

* 14th of September, 1759.

Luke Scrafton, is a young fellow of great worth and honour. Much I fear he is too far gone to be recovered by the coast air : he has been a constant attendant of mine in all our expeditions, and can solve any question you may have to ask on the subject of Bengal. For God's sake return him to me in good health and condition ! ”

Clive was also on the most intimate terms with Captain Latham, a distinguished officer of His Majesty's navy ; and this intimacy was increased from that gentleman's marriage to a relation of Mrs. Clive, who had accompanied her to India. I have found numerous private letters from Captain Latham, which are all written in the open manly style of a British seaman, and bear a convincing testimony to the tone of Clive's mind on all points connected with his friends. From the tenor of one, in answer to a letter from Clive, written immediately after the enthronement of Meer Jaffier, it would seem that Mrs. Latham was one of those whom he considered (from the relation in which she stood to him) entitled to participate in his good fortune. His conduct on this occasion appears to have given sincere pleasure to Mrs. Clive ; as the letter in which his kindness and liberality are noticed is superscribed with the word “ Charming,” in her own handwriting.

I have before mentioned the origin of Clive's

regard for Colonel Forde; the grounds upon which he selected him for the command of Bengal, and the degree in which he deemed himself indebted to him for his great and brilliant achievements. We have also seen the poignant feelings with which he regarded the conduct of the Court of Directors towards this able and gallant officer, who, immediately after the capture of Masulipatam, had the mortification to find himself superseded by Colonel Coote, who, a year before, had been his junior in Adlercron's regiment; but, returning from India with fortune and reputation, had obtained a Colonel's commission, and had just landed at Madras in command of a regiment destined for Calcutta.

Though Colonel Coote had evinced, on the expedition to Bengal, those qualities as an officer which subsequently made him so renowned, neither his opportunities nor his achievements bore as yet any comparison with those of Colonel Forde; but the successes of the latter were not known in England at the period of Coote's appointment. Many, therefore, will deny the justice of Clive's complaint of the conduct of his superiors on this occasion; but even these must admire that warmth and decision, with which he pledged himself to support an officer with whom he had no private friendship, except such

as had been formed in consequence of his eminent public services.

The news of Colonel Coote's arrival reached Clive about the same period as the account of Major Forde's capture of Masulipatam, and of the conclusion of the treaty with the Subahdar of the Deccan. Desiring, at such a moment, to afford every consolation to the mind of that meritorious officer, he not only stated his opinion as to his superior claims to those of the officer by whom he was superseded, but gave him the most unqualified assurances of his future support.

"I can easily conceive," he observes in a letter* to Colonel Forde upon this occasion, "that such rank and honour bestowed (I think I can say without flattery) on one so much your inferior in every respect, must give you much concern. I assure you it has affected me greatly, and is one of my principal motives for wanting to push home with the utmost expedition on the 'Royal George.' I flatter myself, the request I have to make will not be denied me, which is, that you will stay in Bengal all next year, provided Coote remains on the coast. If within that time I do not get you a colonel's or lieutenant-colonel's commission, and an appointment of commander-

* 24th of August, 1759.

in-chief of all the forces in India, I will from that instant decline all transactions with Directors and East India affairs.”

Clive's resentment at the Court of Directors was increased by their subsequently annulling Colonel Forde's appointment to Bengal, while his attachment to that officer was greatly heightened by his admirable conduct in the destruction of the Dutch armament. But there were other feelings which may have influenced his mind. He certainly entertained at this period a strong prejudice against Colonel Coote, which may possibly have originated from the prominent manner in which that officer, when only a Captain, was brought forward at Calcutta to support the alleged rights of his Majesty's service against those of the Company. But we have, nevertheless, proofs that Clive appreciated his talents from his employing* him on all occasions, and particularly in detaching him, after the battle of Plassey, in pursuit of the French corps. But at the same time that he entertained this high opinion of his military talents, he considered, from his whole conduct in Bengal, that he was mercenary and prone to intrigue, and consequently an unfit person to be intrusted with

* Captain Coote commanded the troops detached to take Hooghley, and he was, before the battle of Plassey, sent with the advance to attack Kutwa.

great powers on such a scene. I do not find among Clive's papers any specific grounds to justify this opinion; and in the absence of all such documents, we must conclude, from the high reputation which Colonel Coote attained and supported, that it was erroneous; or, at all events, that, if this eminent commander evinced in his youth any such dispositions as those of which he was suspected, they were early corrected: for though he never displayed any remarkable talents as a statesman, he assuredly became as qualified for the chief military command in India as any person that ever held that station; and during his latter years, the love and esteem in which he was held by his countrymen was even exceeded by the affectionate regard and attachment of the native troops, whom he so often led to victory.

In giving this tribute to a soldier, whose memory I have venerated from my earliest years, I must do justice to Clive by declaring my sincere conviction (formed from the perusal of his numerous letters upon the subject) that he was most sincere and conscientious in the opinion he expressed, and upon which he acted. With such impressions upon his mind, he certainly thought he was doing his duty to the public by his endeavours to keep Colonel Coote at Madras; and he was so solicitous to effect this object that

he consented to the request of the government of Fort St. George, that the regiment of that officer should remain for some time at that presidency.

He enters fully upon this subject in his correspondence, both with Mr. Pigot and Mr. Vansittart; but his letters contain merely a repetition of his opinions as to Colonel Coote's unfitness for the general command of the forces in Bengal, while he recognises the benefits to be derived from his services in the mere military operations on the coast of Coromandel. The success of Clive's efforts on this occasion proved fortunate for the reputation of Colonel Coote, who, during the subsequent year, established a high military character by the battle of Wandewash and the capture of Pondicherry.

I have been compelled to enter more at length upon this subject than I desired, from its being intimately connected with those disputes regarding the employment of officers in India in which Clive became involved on his return to England. Colonel Coote, when he revisited his native country after the campaign of 1757, was received with favour and distinction. He was possessed of a small fortune, his connections were respectable, and his manners and address manly and agreeable. He became more prominent from being the senior King's land officer employed on the expedition to Bengal; and, from

the comparatively low estimation in which the Company's* officers were held at that period, his fame was advanced to detract from their pretensions. He was represented as a rising officer, of whom Clive was jealous; and it was believed by many (till contradicted several years afterwards by his own evidence), that it was through his advice and remonstrances that the army advanced to the field of Plassey. Besides the influence and popularity which those combined causes gave to this officer, he enjoyed the marked favour and friendship of Mr. Sullivan, the Chairman of the Court of Directors, whose subsequent rupture with Clive is in a great degree to be attributed to their difference in opinion with regard to the respective pretensions and merits of Colonels Coote and Forde.

Clive, at the period of his second visit to his native country, was thirty-five years of age. We collect from his private correspondence, that he retained much of that hilarity of disposition for which he had been remarkable in youth. He was fond of female society; and many of his letters show that he was by no means indifferent to those aids by which personal appearance is improved. It was the fashion of the period to

* Though Clive held the King's commission as Lieutenant-Colonel, he was always considered as a Company's officer.

dress in gayer apparel than we now do ; and the European visiter at an Indian Durbar, or Court, always wore a rich dress. We find in a letter* to Clive, from his friend Captain Latham, a description of a Durbar suit he was preparing for him, in which he says he has preferred a fine scarlet coat with handsome gold lace, to the common wear of velvet. He has also made up, he writes, a fine brocade waistcoat ; and he adds to this intelligence, that “ it is his design to line the coat with parchment, that it may not wrinkle ! ”

In a commission which Clive sent to his friend Mr. Orme, there is an amusing instance of his attention to the most trifling parts of his dress.

“ I must now trouble you,” he observes†, “ with a few commissions concerning family affairs. Imprimis, what you can provide must be of the best and finest you can get for love or money ; two hundred shirts, the wristbands worked, some of the ruffles worked with a border either in squares or points, and the rest plain ; stocks, neckcloths, and handkerchiefs in proportion ; three corge‡ of the finest stockings ; several pieces of plain and spotted muslin, two yards wide, for aprons ; book-muslins ; cam-

* 5th of August, 1757.

† 1st of August, 1757.

‡ A corge is twenty pair.

brics ; a few pieces of the finest dimity ; and a complete set of table linen of Fort St. David's diaper made for the purpose."

In the list of packages which Mr. Richard Clive sent to his son in Bengal, one is a box of wigs ! Whether Clive had resorted to this ornament from want of hair, or from deference to the fashion of the period, I know not ; but there is* an authentic anecdote of his boyhood, which proves how essential a wig was considered to all who were full dressed. Clive had, when very young, been admitted by a relation, who was Captain of the Tower, to be one of the spectators when his Majesty George the Second happened to visit that fortress. Nothing was wanted in the boy's dress to prepare him for the honour of approaching majesty except a wig ! To supply this want one of the old Captain's was put upon his head ; and his appearance in this costume was so singular as to attract the notice and smiles of the King, who inquired who he was, and spoke to him in a very kind and gracious manner.†

In concluding this chapter on the private

* This anecdote of his father was communicated by Lord Powis.

† It is added that he was sent to school in a wig ; but, as may be supposed, was soon quizzed out of it by his play-fellows.

occurrences of Clive's life during a period so eventful to his fame and fortune, I shall estimate, as far as I have the means, the wealth he carried to England, as well as the amount which he had, before he left India, given to, or settled upon, his friends and relations. I have already shown, in the fullest manner, how his great riches were acquired ; and it is a grateful task to record the generous manner in which a considerable portion of them was distributed.

Clive, from what has been stated, may be said, when he returned to India in 1755, to have been worth little or no money beyond what he had vested for redeeming the small family estate, and giving his parents an annuity. When he took possession of the government of Fort Saint David, he embarked in trade, like others who filled similar stations ; but, to judge from his correspondence, he had not much success in his commercial pursuits. We read of nothing but bad markets, or the want of means of those who owed him money. He appears, before he embarked on the expedition to Bengal, to have made a large speculation in benjamin, which turned out badly. It is entertaining, when associated with the scenes in which he became engaged, to pursue his remarks upon his unprofitable adventure in this and other articles of trade.

After desiring his friend and agent, Mr. Orme, not to demand payment of the money owing to him by Messrs. Pybus and Roberts, and that the interest of the debt should be only 4 per cent., he observes *, “ You have given me a most curious account of my adventure in the *Grampus*. If I had not made better strokes in war than in trade, my money concerns would by this time be drawing to a conclusion.”

The whole of Clive's money, when he returned to India in 1755, appears to have been in that country ; for we find, from his correspondence, that he had hardly sufficient uninvested cash in England to pay for his annual supplies. He became anxious, however, after he attained great wealth, to remit it home ; but this, owing to various causes, was very difficult. The public treasury was so rich from the successes in Bengal, that, for a period, no bills were drawn upon the Directors ; Clive, therefore, had recourse to the Dutch Company, through whom he sent the greater part of his fortune ; he also transmitted a considerable sum in diamonds† (a common mode at that time), and the

* 11th of March, 1758.

† Clive sent sixteen thousand gold mohurs to his agents at Madras, Messrs. Orme and Vansittart, with directions to purchase diamonds as a remittance.

rest in private bills; and, latterly, two on the Company.*

I have carefully examined his letters to his agents, from the 21st of August, 1755, when he advised them of his first remittance, till January, 1759, when he made one of his last; and the amount of property sent to England during that period is, as nearly as the difference of exchange and the loss† on bills enable us to judge, 280,000*l*. Of this I calculate that he received 210,000*l*. on the enthronement of Meer Jaffier; and the remaining 70,000*l*. is made up by part of his former fortune, his prize money at Gheriah and Chandernagore, the receipts from the high stations‡ he held, and the accumulation of interest upon a considerable part of his

* One of the bills on the Company was for 8000*l*., and the other for 32,881*l*. 12*s*. 2*d*. He advises his agents of these bills on the 9th of November and 23d of December, 1758.

† Clive expected the bills on Holland to produce 183,000*l*., but, after a vexatious delay, they were paid with great deduction. His father states the loss upon this transaction as amounting to 10,000*l*.

‡ I consider the statement of the Committee of the House of Commons, of Clive's receipts at Moorshedabad, to be exaggerated; but we shall have occasion to notice this statement hereafter, particularly the note annexed to it, in which it is asserted, in direct opposition to truth, that Clive's jaghire was obtained at the same period as the donation from Meer Jaffier. Mr. Mill copies the statement and note without remark. (Vol. iii. p. 326.)

property during the last five years of his residence in India.

From what has been stated we may assume that Clive's fortune, before the jaghire was settled upon him, did not amount to 300,000*l*. It appears from documents before me that, previous to this grant, he had given away, or vested for annuities, a sum not less than 50,000*l*.* (more than one sixth of his fortune), to render comfortable and independent those for whom he cherished affection and gratitude.

Clive was, subsequently to these acts of generosity, enriched by the grant of the jaghire, which he himself estimates at 27,000*l*. per annum. With this addition, we may conclude he had an income of upwards of 40,000*l*.; a large amount, but far below what this Indian Cræsus (for such he was deemed) was thought by his countrymen to possess.

* The following sums appear to have been given or settled upon his relations and friends:—

Present to his sisters	-	-	£10,000
Present to Captain Maskelyne and others			10,000
Money vested to produce an annuity for his father, of	-		£500
Ditto, his aunts	-		150
Ditto, Colonel Lawrence	-		500
To keep a coach for his parents			300
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Yearly amount of annuities	-		£1450
Sum vested to produce the above	-		30,000
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Total	-	-	£50,000



CHAP. XII.

CLIVE remained in his native country between three and four years; and it will be proper briefly to narrate the events of his private life during this period, to notice the part he took in the political transactions of the times, and the connections he formed with persons of power and influence, whether in the direction of Indian affairs, or of the more general interests of the British empire. The knowledge of such facts, connected as they became with his future career, is quite essential to our subject.

The constitution of Clive had never been robust. He had been, for the last two years in Bengal, freer than usual from the attacks of a spasmodic complaint, to which he appears to have been more or less subject from his earliest years. In 1759 he had a very violent attack of rheumatism, and feared, at one time, that it might settle into gout; but this apprehension vanished; and when he embarked at Calcutta he describes himself as in excellent health.

When Clive reached England, he was received with distinction by his Sovereign and the mem-

bers of the administration ; and, notwithstanding the deep offence taken at his last public despatch, the Court of Directors, and particularly their Chairman, Mr. Sullivan, welcomed him as one to whom the Company were deeply indebted. The enjoyment, however, of those flattering attentions was early interrupted by a violent and dangerous illness, which for many months threatened to terminate his existence.

Clive was not, for some time after his arrival, honoured by any public mark of royal favour. This seems to have arisen from two causes : one, his very long and serious illness ; the other, his desire to obtain more than the ministers were willing to grant. He, probably, at first expected to enter the British House of Peers, and to have a red riband ; but, after a considerable delay, he received only an Irish peerage.

In writing * to his friend Major Carnac upon this subject, he observes ; “ If health had not deserted me on my first arrival in England, in all probability I had been an English peer, instead of an Irish one, with the promise of a red riband. I know I could have bought the title (which is usual), but that I was above, and the honours I have obtained are free and voluntary. My wishes may hereafter be accomplished.”

* 27th of February, 1762.

Clive had assumed a scale of expenditure suited to his income. He engaged in elections to aid his friends in the administration, and to give him the influence he desired in the prosecution of his plans for his own advancement, and the furtherance of those which he thought essential to the prosperity and security of the Indian empire. The expenses into which he was early led, combined with his liberality to his family, amounted to a very large sum * ; and we can easily conceive the alarm with which he received, while yet on a sick bed, an intimation from Mr. Sullivan, that the Directors showed an inclination to question his title to his jaghire.

He strongly and feelingly expresses his sentiments upon this subject in a letter to Mr. Amyatt; "My arrival in England," he observes†, "was attended with every mark of respect that

* This fact he mentions in several letters. In one to Mr. Amyatt, after entreating that gentleman to remain a short time longer in Bengal, to succeed Mr. Vansittart in the government, he warns him against retiring till possessed of an ample fortune. He notices the disappointment experienced by many of their friends, by the discovery of their inadequate means, and adds, that he had already spent ^a (in a period of eighteen months) upwards of 60,000*l*.

† 27th of February, 1762.

^a This letter is dated 27th of February, 1762. Clive could not have reached England before September or October, 1760, and had been a twelvemonth on a sick bed.

I could wish, and my interest in Leadenhall Street might have been of as much consequence as I could have desired, for the advantage of my friends ; but a most severe fit of sickness over-set all. For twelve months it was difficult to pronounce whether I was to live or die. In so dreadful a situation, I could not think much of India, or indeed of any thing else but death. It is very natural to think, the interest of a dying man could not be very great. Under these circumstances, I had hints given me that either some attempts would be made upon my jaghire, or some proposal made for giving it up to the Company after a certain time, on a supposition, perhaps, that I had not long to live. Accordingly I was given to understand by Sullivan, that the gentlemen of the Secret Committee would wait upon me on this subject. But health returning, this proposal was dropt, and I have heard nothing more of it since. Although I have such an interest at Court and in Parliament, that I should not be afraid of an attack from the whole Court of Directors united, yet all my friends advise me I should do nothing to exasperate them, if they are silent as to my jaghire. Indeed it is an object of such importance, that I should be inexcusable if I did not make every other consideration give way to it ; and this is one of the reasons why I cannot join

openly with the Bengal gentlemen in their resentments. It depends upon you, my friend, to make me a free man, by getting this grant confirmed from Delhi, and getting such acknowledgment from under the hands of the old Nabob, and the present Nabob, as may enable me to put all our enemies at defiance. In this, I am sure, you will be assisted by Vansittart."

The account of the deposition of Meer Jaffier, and the election of Cossim Ali Khan, which had been planned by Mr. Holwell immediately after Clive left Calcutta, will occupy the next chapter. I only so far notice this revolution at present, as to state its effect on Clive's private feelings; as it divided and rendered irreconcilable enemies the friends in India whom he most valued. Though he deplored the revolution, and anticipated its bad consequences to the reputation of the English Government, he believed Mr. Vansittart to have been both disinterested and conscientious in the part he took; and with this impression, while he admitted the manly sincerity and honourable principles which dictated the violent opposition of his friend Major Carnac, he decidedly blamed the warmth and want of respect with which he had addressed his superiors on this subject. Mr. Amyatt was much respected by Clive both for his talents and integrity. He wished him to succeed Mr. Van-

sittart in the Government, and was unwilling that his services should be lost by his continued opposition, grounded on a measure which, as Clive truly stated, however much to be regretted, was now past and could not be recalled.

With such sentiments, Clive endeavoured to reconcile his friends to each other. His efforts were not successful : but it is a remarkable testimony to his personal character, that, during this period of violent collision between the parties in Bengal, every individual engaged in the contest referred to him, as to one on whose honour and judgment they had implicit reliance ; and his more particular friends, though opposed on all other points, appear to have united whenever his interests were concerned.

To understand the motives which induced Clive to take an active part in the affairs of the India House, it is necessary to explain the actual condition of the different parties who at this period took a share in the management of the Company's concerns.

The legislature had not as yet directly interfered in the administration of our Eastern possessions ; but ministers and men of high rank and influence had, nevertheless, great power and weight, both in the Court of Directors and in the Court of Proprietors. This, however, appears

to have been seldom if ever exerted but to serve individuals, and to have been more maintained to promote parliamentary influence, and as a means of rewarding and attaching friends, than with any view to the benefit of the public interests of either the Indian or the British empire.

Mr. Sullivan, as has been mentioned before, had attained an ascendancy in the direction, of which he was in complete possession when Clive came to England. But though he had a majority of the Directors with him, he had many and virulent opponents among the Proprietors. The most prominent of these were gentlemen who had been in Bengal, who considered themselves injured by the frequent supersession of the servants of that presidency by those of Madras and Bombay, to which they considered Mr. Sullivan more attached, and particularly to the latter.

Though Mr. Sullivan, as has been shown, professed great admiration of Clive, and was much indebted to him for the station he had attained in the direction, he appears to have early regarded him as a dangerous rival. It is certainly to be concluded from what subsequently took place, that the intimation regarding his jaghire was meant to repress the ambition of Clive, as connected with Indian affairs; and for a period it had the desired effect. This we learn from

several of his private letters. In one, to Mr. Pybus at Madras, he makes the following observations on this subject* : —

“The Court of Directors seem to be much in the same situation as when you left England. Sullivan is the reigning director, and he follows the same plan of keeping every one out of the direction who is endowed with more knowledge, or would be likely to have more weight and influence, than himself. This kind of political behaviour has exasperated most of the gentlemen who are lately come from India, particularly those from Bengal. They are surprised I do not join in their resentments; and I should think it very surprising if I did, considering I have such an immense stake in India. My future power, my future grandeur, all depend upon the receipt of the jaghire money. I should be a madman to set at defiance those who at present show no inclination to hurt me. I have so far fallen into their way of thinking, as to preside at a general meeting of a club of East Indians once a fortnight; and this has all the effect I could wish, of keeping Sullivan in awe, and of convincing him, that, though I do not mean to hurt him, I can do such a thing if he attempts to hurt me. Indeed I am so strongly

* 27th February, 1762.

supported by the Government and by Parliament, that I should not be afraid of an attack from the whole body united; but there is no necessity of wantonly exciting them to attempts against my interest."

Clive, soon after he recovered from his illness, appears to have established himself in great favour at Court; and the Queen stood god-mother to one of his children. These marks of royal favour, and his connection with the administration, combined with his known opinion that the British legislature ought to take a share in the management of the national interests in India, tended much to increase Mr. Sullivan's jealousy, and to alarm his ambition. His feelings, indeed, for some time remained dormant; but from the first day of Clive's landing in England there existed no cordiality between them. That no rupture ensued during this period, is, in some degree, to be attributed to Mr. Sullivan being in 1762 out of the direction by rotation. Before next general election, circumstances occurred which decided Clive in the determination to combine his interests with those of the great majority of Indians*, to oppose this autocrat of the India House.

* We have already noticed, that the most violent of Mr. Sullivan's opponents were the gentlemen from Bengal, who formed, on this occasion, a party, long afterwards known in the India House by the name of the "Bengal Squad."

We find, in one of Clive's letters* to Mr. Vansittart, what I believe to be an honest statement of his feelings at the period at which it was written; and it sufficiently indicates the part he afterwards took to prevent the re-election of Mr. Sullivan.

"There is," he observes, "a terrible storm brewing against the next general election. Sullivan, who is out of the direction this year, is strongly opposed by Rous and his party, and by part, if not all, of the East Indians (particularly the Bengalees), and matters are carried to such lengths, that either Sullivan or Rous must give way. * * * * * I must acknowledge that in my heart I am a well-wisher for the cause of Rous, although, considering the great stake I have in India, it is probable I shall remain neuter. Sullivan might have attached me to his interest if he had pleased, but he could never forgive the Bengal letter†, and never has reposed that confidence in me which my services to the East India Company entitled me to. The consequence has been, that we have all along behaved to one another like shy cocks, at times outwardly expressing great regard and friendship for each other."

* 22d November, 1762.

† For this letter, vide *antè*, p. 129.

The appearance even of friendship could not long continue between individuals actuated by such different interests and feelings. Lord Clive was the first to avow openly his real sentiments ; but, according to his own statement, he had the completest proof that Mr. Sullivan was the secret abetter of those who sought to ruin him both in fortune and fame ; and he ascribed to the encouragement of that gentleman the numerous articles which appeared in the newspapers and other ephemeral publications, traducing his character. This belief was confirmed by a knowledge that the personal efforts of the ex-chairman were unremittingly applied to exalt the name of Coote to a rivalry with that of Clive. But what appears to have exasperated him in the highest degree was the production of a letter* which Mr. Sullivan had written to his friend Colonel Coote, in March, 1761, in which, when remarking upon some disputes that the Colonel had with the government at Madras, he observes ; “ The behaviour of the then Bengal gentlemen to you being similar to their treatment of their masters, it puts an end to all reasoning.

* In the heat of the canvass at the India House, in the beginning of 1763, a copy of this letter was obtained and circulated. One was sent to Clive, who transmitted it to Mr. Vansittart, with expressions of the most unqualified indignation.

Still your detention at Madras verifies that reflection of Pope upon human foresight, ‘Whatever is, is best ;’ and how much are we indebted to Providence for this disobedience to our orders. Your country and your friend share the honour of your masterly and prosperous conduct.”

In the same letter, when referring more immediately to Colonel Coote’s quarrel* with the gentlemen of Fort St. George, Mr. Sullivan adds : —

“ Our people at Madras, we find, are hot-headed, but they are able, generous, and open. I can smother their rebukes ; but the ungrateful wretches, late of Bengal, have hurt my temper. I pray keep up a friendly correspondence with General Lawrence, — he is great and good. I adore him for his distinguished and noble spirit.”

The allusions in the latter paragraph of this letter were too plainly directed against Clive to be mistaken ; and considering that, at the period when it was written, Mr. Sullivan was on professed good terms with him, he deemed the ex-

* Colonel Coote, when he took Pondicherry, supported by the Admiral, desired to keep that fortress for the King of England, and appointed an officer to command it. Mr. Pigot, and the gentlemen in Council at Fort St. George, refused to advance pay to the army till the fortress was given up ; and having thus compelled that concession, removed the commandant nominated by Colonel Coote.

pression of such sentiments unpardonable. But, on the other hand, it might have been urged by Mr. Sullivan's friends, that these sentiments, though brought to light by some breach of confidence, were meant only for a private friend, and that there could be no breach of friendship where none existed ; that Lord Clive and Mr. Sullivan belonged to different parties in politics ; that their personal connections and views, particularly as connected with the Indian administration in England, were opposed to each other ; and that, if Mr. Sullivan had been led by considerations of interest to preserve outward terms of cordiality with Lord Clive, his Lordship had been alone restrained from attacking him by similar prudential considerations.

Amid the causes which tended to hasten a rupture between these individuals, we must not omit the irritation produced by their difference of opinion as to the merits and claims of the Company's servants in India. Clive was the bold and persevering advocate of all those who had gained and merited his friendship by the aid they gave him in the performance of their public duties. Several of his recommendations to Mr. Sullivan met with attention ; but others were treated with slight or delay. I have already mentioned Clive's feeling respecting Colonel Forde. However great the claims of that officer,

the more recent successes of his rival, Colonel Coote, had fully justified those who furthered his promotion in England; but Major Carnac had distinguished himself in Bengal by the defeat of the Shah-Zada, the surrender of that prince, and the capture of M. Law and the French who were attached to him. These services, Clive thought, gave him a claim to a superior commission. He was also very anxious to obtain a majority for Captain Knox, who, independent of his services under him, had, on several late occasions*, established a reputation for skill and gallantry, superior to any one of his standing in India.

At this period it was not uncommon to give superior commissions to those who greatly distinguished themselves. Clive was the advocate of a system, which, considering the actual state of the service, he thought indispensable to reward and encourage men of talent and enterprise. Mr. Sullivan, though he did not deny the merits of the persons brought to his notice by Clive, appears to have been very reluctant to promote them, at the hazard of creating discontent to others. He was, like other members of the Court of Directors at that period, prompt to

* The rapid march of Captain Knox to the relief of Patna in 1760, and the severe action he afterwards fought with a handful of men against Cuddim Hussun Khan, who had a considerable army, were exploits worthy of Clive himself.

attend to the frequent appeals made to them against the local government ; and such appeals were usually from those who had no pretensions to preferment but that of seniority, and who were often persons quite unfitted, by their habits and character, for the delicate and arduous duties which, at this period, devolved upon officers intrusted with high military command. Clive, by his notes in answer to the Chairman on these points, appears to have been very impatient of the general reasoning with which his applications were answered. He conscientiously felt, in supporting those he brought forward, that he acted from no motive but that of the public good ; he saw that by such maxims our Indian empire never would have been gained ; and he was quite satisfied that the system which Mr. Sullivan desired to establish, of directing the attention of the civil and military servants in India to the government in England, was calculated to subvert all authority in the local administration, and, in its results, to distract, weaken, and distress our yet infant empire in the East. Sullivan's were the principles of the head of a commercial company ; Clive's those of the founder and sustainer of an empire.

To understand all the motives which influenced Clive's conduct at this period, it is necessary to advert to the changes in the British administration,

and especially, in so far as these affected the individuals with whom he was most intimately connected.

The personal influence exercised by Lord Bute over the mind of his young sovereign counteracted the wise and vigorous measures of Pitt; who, on being thwarted in his design of anticipating the hostile intentions of Spain, retired with his friends from the cabinet.* Aware of the great popularity of his predecessor, Lord Bute (who succeeded Mr. Pitt) tried every effort to increase the number of his adherents. Amongst others, Clive was courted to give his support to the new administration. His fame, his wealth, and the votes he commanded, gave importance to his aid; and the terms offered him were alike tempting to his ambition and interests: but his respect for the integrity and great talents of Mr. Pitt had been increased by personal acquaintancet, and he cherished the

* Mr. Pitt resigned on the 5th October, 1761.

† We find in Clive's correspondence many allusions to his intercourse with Mr. Pitt, whom he describes as impressed with the fullest conviction of the importance of India to England. In a draft of a private note to the Chairman of the Directors, (which is not dated) he observes; "A few days ago I was with the Duke of Newcastle and Mr. Pitt. The discourse of the former was truly in the courtiers' style — many professions of friendship and regard, many offers of service, without the least meaning in them ;

sincerest attachment to Mr. George Grenville, who, on Pitt's retirement, had resigned his situation as Treasurer of the Navy. Besides these personal considerations, the measures of Mr. Pitt were congenial with every sentiment of his mind ; and he augured no benefit to the nation from the less energetic character of his successor, whose avowed eagerness for peace (he anticipated) would prevent its being concluded on such favourable terms as the successes of the war gave grounds to expect.

Governed by these motives, Clive rejected the overtures of Lord Bute. He states the grounds of his conduct in a letter to Major Carnac, written a month after the change of ministers occurred.

"Now that we are to have peace abroad," he observes*, "war is commencing at home amongst ourselves. There is to be a most violent contest, at the meeting of Parliament, whether

but the discourse of the latter, which lasted an hour and a half, was of a more serious nature, and much more to the purpose. The subject was the support and welfare of the East India Company. Mr. Pitt seems thoroughly convinced of the infinite consequence of the trade of the East India Company to the nation ; he made no scruple to me of giving it the preference to our concerns in America. Indeed, a man of Mr. Pitt's influence and way of thinking is necessary to oppose to the influence of Lord Anson, who certainly is no friend to our Company."

* 23d November, 1762.

Bute or Newcastle is to govern this kingdom ; and the times are so critical that every member has an opportunity of fixing a price upon his services. I still continue to be one of those unfashionable kind of people who think very highly of independency, and to bless my stars, indulgent fortune has enabled me to act according to my conscience. Being very lately asked, by authority, if I had any honours to ask from my sovereign, my answer was, that I thought it dishonourable to take advantage of the times ; but that when these parliamentary disputes were at an end, if his Majesty should then approve of my conduct by rewarding it, I should think myself highly honoured in receiving any marks of the royal favour.”

When the treaty of peace between France and England was in the course of negotiation, the opinion of Bussy * was taken on all points connected with the interests of his nation in India. No similar reference appears to have been made to Clive, whose knowledge far exceeded that of every other individual, on this important subject. But he was too earnest in his desire to

* Bussy carried home a very large fortune, and through its influence he attained great consideration. The favour he enjoyed at court was increased by his connection with the Duc de Choiseul, whose niece he married soon after his return to France.

promote the future peace of India to allow any party motives to prevent his offering every information that could aid ministers in that part of the negotiation which related to our Eastern possessions; he transmitted, therefore, a memorial to Lord Bute.

In this memorial Clive stated, that it was not now more than fifteen years since the European nations, who had established factories in India, were as much regulated and controlled in their concerns by the native governments as the natives themselves. To the extortions to which this exposed them, to the expense of their establishments, and to the decrease in value in the Indian manufactures, he attributes the disappointment of the expectations originally formed of great profits from this trade. Dupleix (he observes), on the ground that commerce alone must, under such circumstances, be a losing concern, suggested to his government the policy of making conquests in India; territorial revenue being, in his opinion, the only source by which a European nation could derive wealth from that country.

“Acting upon the principles he recommended,” to use the words of the memorial, “Dupleix engaged in the contentions of the princes of the country, and had, at one time, in a great measure, obtained his aim. There

remained nothing to complete it but the expulsion of the English out of Hindustan. We were at that time wholly attached to mercantile ideas ; but undoubted proof of M. Dupleix's projects obliged us to draw the sword, and our successes have been so great that we have accomplished for ourselves, and against the French, exactly every thing that the French intended to accomplish for themselves and against us."

After stating these facts, Clive proceeds to detail, in this memorial, the extent to which concessions may be made at a general peace. He expresses great anxiety that the French should, if possible, be limited as to the number of men they are to maintain upon the coast of Coromandel ; but, under every circumstance, he is strenuous against their re-admission to Bengal, except as merchants.

Lord Bute expressed his obligations to Lord Clive for this communication.

" I have received *, " he states, " your Lordship's letter, and the paper accompanying it, in which you have offered your sentiments on the interests of this country with respect to our possessions in the East Indies, in a very clear and masterly manner. The lights you have thrown on the subject could not fail of being

* Letter from Lord Bute, 1st September, 1762.

acceptable to me. I return your Lordship thanks, therefore, for the communication ; and you may be assured that I will make a proper use of them."

Every attention possible was given to Clive's suggestions ; and by the definitive treaty of peace, concluded in February, 1763, the French government agreed not to maintain any troops in Bengal, or in the northern circars. These were the chief objects to which he had directed the attention of Lord Bute ; but that minister (consulting only his friend Mr. Sullivan, and the Directors) had inserted an article into the preliminary treaty, by which the recognition, by the French, of the title of Mahommed Ali Khan, as Nabob of the Carnatic, was obtained by the English recognising the title of the ally of the French, Salabut Jung, as Subahdar of the Decan. Nothing could be more preposterous than this guarantee (for to such it amounted) of the title of two Indian princes standing in the relations the Subahdar of the Decan and the Nabob of Arcot did to each other, and to their European allies. Besides, Salabut Jung had for some years ceased to be the ally of the French, and was the ally of the English Government.

Clive, it would appear from the documents in my possession, only heard by accident of this extraordinary article. He hastened to Mr. Wood,

the Under Secretary of State, whom he soon convinced of the embarrassment and danger it might produce. Lord Bute being also satisfied by his reasoning, it was, in forming the definitive treaty, so altered and amended, that (as I have elsewhere remarked) it might have remained innoxious, “ had it not been subsequently converted by his Majesty’s ministers into a pretext for one of the most unjustifiable and mischievous acts * of interference with the powers of the Company that is to be found on the page of Indian history.”

Clive was dissatisfied with the peace, and voted in the minority that condemned that measure. His having come forward, under such circumstances, to give his aid in improving the treaty, as far as the interests of the Company were concerned, greatly increased his popularity with the proprietors. He continued in opposition, though to the sacrifice of his personal interests ; nor was his conduct, on this occasion, dictated by any hope of Mr. Pitt’s restoration to power. He evidently thought that great statesman had, by his own acts, barred himself from all chance of future employment.

* The act to which I here allude is the appointment of Sir John Lindsay, ambassador from the King of England to the Nabob of Arcot. For an account of this transaction, vide *Political India*, vol. ii. p. 36.

• Writing to Mr. Vansittart, Clive observes * ;
“ Mr. Pitt, notwithstanding his great abilities and the many eminent services he has rendered this nation, has become the most odious man living to the King, nobility, and both parliaments. The King can never forgive him that unfortunate visit to the city on the Lord Mayor’s day, his popularity was such, that it seemed as if *King William* instead of *King George* had been invited to that grand entertainment. As to the Privy Council, he has honoured them in Parliament with the names of state cowards and political misers. In short, his whole interest in Parliament is lost, and it is very improbable, if not impossible, he should ever come into employment again.”

Ministers, unable to gain Clive, desired to give him every annoyance, and by diminishing his wealth and reputation, to lessen his influence. Lord Bute was Mr. Sullivan’s friend and patron ; and the latter was a willing leader in this attack. The measures taken by his opponents satisfied Clive that he had no means of supporting his own interests but by a successful opposition to Mr. Sullivan at the ensuing general election at the India House.

The share of stock, which at this period, en-

* 2d February, 1762.

titled a proprietor to vote, was 500*l.*; and though it was supposed to be the *bonâ fide* property of the individual who voted, the law was not so strict but what it could be avoided; and there is abundant evidence in the papers before me, that, in these annual contests for the administration, all parties “split votes” (as it was termed) to a very great extent.

Lord Clive, in the election of 1763, mentions his having employed 100,000*l.* in this manner; and we find in the following season, when his friends (after he had left England) so far triumphed over Mr. Sullivan as to bring Mr. Rous into the chair, that a bill * was brought into the House of Commons, and ultimately carried, by which the proprietor was compelled to swear, not only that the stock was *bonâ fide* his property, but that it had been in his possession a twelvemonth. This measure put an end (as was intended) to a practice, which, from being general, had ceased to be a reproach to

* The history of this bill is very curious, and is fully given in the letters of Mr. Walsh and others to Clive. It was brought forward in 1761, and read twice; but owing to some informality in its wording, was thrown out that session. This was imputed by Mr. Sullivan to the measures of his opponents, many of whom would have been disqualified, from not having had the stock for the prescribed period: they, on the other hand, accused Mr. Sullivan of having so timed the bill, as to establish his own votes and destroy those of his opponents.

individuals; and which, when resorted to by one party, left the other no option but following a bad example*, or submitting to defeat.

Clive engaged in the contest at the general election at the India House with all the ardour which belonged to his character. His first intention appears to have been limited to the support of Mr. Rous; but I am led to conclude, from a few papers still preserved upon this subject, that he came forward personally as a candidate.

In a letter to Mr. Vansittart†, adverting to what passed at a numerous meeting of the proprietors, he observes:—

“That tremendous day‡ is over. I need not be particular about it; you will have it from many hands. I should imagine there were present not less than eight hundred proprietors. Numbers of neutral people went off; and no small number of our friends, thinking our ma-

* Mr. Walsh, in a letter to Lord Clive, of the 14th of February, 1765, after telling him of Mr. Sullivan's having split a number of votes, and of Mr. Divon (a partner of Child's house) having split 30,000*l.* to support him, informs Clive that he means to do the same with some of his money. He adds, “I am splitting mine to the amount of 20,000*l.* It is a troublesome and dangerous business, but the act of parliament will put an end to it.”

† 19th March, 1763.

‡ Clive here alludes to a quarterly meeting of the Court of Proprietors.

majority so great, that there was no occasion for their presence. Indeed, upon the holding up of hands, I thought we were at least two to one. This is really a great victory, considering we had the united strength of the whole ministry against us.

“ Our cause gains ground daily, I should think we shall be stronger at the election than we were in the General Court. However, this time only can show, and I do not choose to be very sanguine, our opponents being very active.”

In a subsequent part of the same letter, anticipating success as certain, he enters into particulars as to the share he proposed to take in the affairs of the Company, and the arrangements he hoped to be able to carry into effect. It is a relief, when accompanying him into such scenes, to have the proof which this letter affords, that the expectation of being better able to promote the interests and strengthen the empire of India, was the leading motive which induced him to seek a station, which he may deem it most fortunate for himself and the interest of his country that he failed in attaining.

“ If we should succeed,” he adds in the letter before quoted, “ I have no thought of ever accepting the Chair ; I have neither application, knowledge, nor time, to undertake so laborious an employ. I shall confine myself to the political

and military operations ; and I think I may promise, you shall have a very large military force in India, such a force as will leave little to apprehend from our enemies in those parts. I propose having all the troops regimented ; that there shall be kept up at Bengal three battalions of infantry, consisting of seven hundred and eighty men each battalion, and three companies of artillery, and four battalions of sepoys ; the same at Fort St. George. A much less number will serve for Bombay. But more of this by the latter ships, when we see the event of the thing."

From letters addressed to his friends in India, during the first two years of his residence in England, it may be inferred that Clive, on his return to his native country, had no intention whatever of involving himself so deeply with the parties at the India House, and for some time he had little intercourse with any of the Directors.

"The situation I am in at present," he observes in a letter to Mr. Lushington*, "and the part of the town where I now reside, seldom gives me an opportunity of seeing any of the Directors, to whom I have been very sparing of applications, since I do not like refusals."

From this and other facts we may collect that the desire to repel attack, on one hand, and the zeal and confidence of friends, on the other,

* 28th February, 1762.

hurried him into the contest in which he became engaged. His cause was warmly espoused by many noblemen and gentlemen of the first respectability. Almost all those who had served in India were of his party, and brought with them their friends and connections. These classes of proprietors were all-powerful at the quarterly meetings of the General Court; but when Directors were balloted for, the election was chiefly decided by persons in different walks of life, many of whom seldom, if ever, attended those Courts; but, having bought stock, either as a good investment of capital, or as the means of establishing an influence with the Directors, or with Administration, they gave their votes at elections as suited their respective interests. Mr. Sullivan had in his favour a great majority of the Directors, and he was actively supported by ministers; his strength was consequently great with this class of voters, and with persons employed in England by the Company, and the officers and dependents of Government. He numbered also, among his friends, many of the merchants and tradesmen in the city, and nearly the whole of the ship-owners and others connected with the trade to India.

No election ever excited more interest than that now pending. Each party summoned all its forces; but Clive was destined to sustain his

first defeat in a contest, in which we cannot but regret he should ever have engaged. His victorious opponents lost no time in making him feel the full weight of their resentment.

It has been already stated that Clive received his jaghire in 1759 : the grounds upon which it had been granted and accepted were, at that period, placed upon the records of Government. He had enjoyed it four years ; receiving, annually, its amount from the Company. Immediately after his return to England an intimation was conveyed to him, by Mr. Sullivan, that the Secret Committee of the Directors desired to communicate with him regarding this grant. He expressed his willingness to meet them, and enter into any explanation ; and, considering the jaghire only as a life-rent, he was disposed to meet any fair arrangement that could be suggested ; but the subject had not been re-agitated. Three years had passed, and his revenue from this source was regularly paid by the Bengal Government to his agents in Calcutta. Under such circumstances, whatever he might have apprehended from the hostility of Mr. Sullivan, whom he had certainly provoked by an open and determined opposition, he could not but be astonished to hear that the first step the Directors took, after the election of 1763, was to transmit orders to the Bengal Government to stop all

further payments on account of Lord Clive's jaghire, and to furnish them with an account of all sums which had been paid to that nobleman and his attornies since the date of the grant.

I find, among the MSS. in my possession, a short narrative of the progress of this transaction, which presents, in a very compressed form, a series of facts, a knowledge of which is quite essential to the clear understanding of this question ; I shall therefore give them in the words of the writer.*

“ By the ninth article of the treaty between the Company and Meer Jaffier, at the time of the revolution in 1757, certain lands to the south of Calcutta were ceded to the Company as perpetual renters, the Nabob reserving to himself the lordship and quit-rents, which amounted to near 30,000*l.* yearly ; and the Company could never be legally dispossessed so long as they continued to pay that quit-rent. The Company farmed out these ceded lands for above 100,000*l.* a year, and paid the quit-rent regularly to the Nabob till the year 1759, when the Nabob, in consideration of the great services rendered him by Lord Clive, assigned over to his Lordship, for life, that quit-rent. The assignment passed

* The extract here quoted is part of a larger paper in defence of Lord Clive's conduct, and believed to be written by the late Sir Henry Strachey.

through all the forms usual in the country ; and Lord Clive became grantee of the rent, under the same authority, precisely, as the East India Company had become grantee of the lands. From this period the rent was duly paid to Lord Clive, instead of to the Nabob ; nor was there any intermission of the payment until differences arose between the noble Lord and Mr. Sullivan. It was intimated to his Lordship that some scruples were entertained concerning any further payment ; and Mr. Sullivan himself, at last informed him, that the Court of Directors were of opinion it ought to be retained for the Company's use. Lord Clive replied, that he was entitled to it as well by the laws of England as by the laws of India ; that his right to the reserved rent was established upon the same authority as the Company's right to the ceded lands ; that he was, notwithstanding, ready to concur in its devolving to the Company after he should have enjoyed the possession of it a reasonable number of years ; and that he was desirous of a conference with the Court of Directors upon the subject, any day they might be pleased to appoint.

“ It might have been imagined that the Court of Directors, if they had no other objects upon this occasion than the honour and interest of the Company and justice to an individual, would have paid

some attention to an acquiescence of this nature. But their resolution, under the influence of their leader, was to resent the offence given them by the noble Lord in the attempt he was meditating against their power ; and this was to be done, not by entering into the discussion of any terms of accommodation, in which each party, contending for the right above mentioned, might have met, but by putting an immediate stop to the payment of the jaghire, and leaving upon his Lordship the difficulties and vexation of recovering his property by a suit at law.

“ There was, however, another secret motive to this violent and unjust measure. It happened that Lord Clive and his parliamentary friends had, for some time, acted in opposition to the court-party ; and in this country, where ministers maintain their power by the inflicting of punishments, as well as by the distribution of rewards, it is no wonder that they should endeavour to weary out by oppression those whom they cannot allure by corruption. The Chairman of the East India Company was known to be at enmity with Lord Clive. Him, therefore, they considered as the aptest instrument with which the noble Lord might be tortured into a change of political conduct ; and the plan of mutual resentment was no sooner resolved upon than executed.

“ By one of the first ships which sailed for Bengal after the contested election, the Court of Directors sent orders to the Governor and Council, that they should no longer pay to the attornies of Lord Clive the rent granted him by Meer Jaffier, but that they should in future detain it in their hands, and carry it to the credit of the Company ; and that they should transmit to the Court of Directors an exact account of all the sums already received by Lord Clive or his attornies on that head, as his Lordship’s pretensions to the jaghire would be settled in England. The public letter conveying these orders assigned no reason for their being issued ; but a private letter* from Mr. Sullivan to Mr. Vansittart, then Governor of Bengal, which was soon after produced on oath in the Court of Chancery, declared that the payment of the jaghire was stopped, because all cordiality between the Court of Directors and Lord Clive was at an end. This vindictive plea, confidentially communicated

* The contents of this private letter to the President of the Council at Bengal were as follows : —“ That all cordiality being at an end with Lord Clive, the Court of Directors had stopped payment of his jaghire ; a measure which would have taken place years ago, had it not been for him (Mr. Sullivan) ; and that, on this head, the said President was to obey every order which he might receive from the Court of Directors ; and that more was not, nor must be expected of him.”

by the Chairman to his friend the Governor, could not, however, be set up in a court of equity in justification of a flagrant violation of right. The Company had, for some years, paid the jaghire without objection ; and even at this time of litigation they neither claimed any title to it themselves nor pretended that there was any other claimant than the present possessor. It is not necessary to enumerate the absurd arguments and mean subterfuges to which the Court of Directors were reduced, in answer to the bill filed against them by Lord Clive in the Court of Chancery. It is sufficient to observe, that the principal reasons which they assigned for discontinuing the payment were, that the Company might one day or other be called to account by the Emperor * of Hindoostan for the

* Lord Clive, in his address to the proprietors in 1764, answers all these objections in a very full and conclusive manner. In treating of the supposed claims of the Emperor and the want of power in the Nabob to grant a jaghire, he remarks, that the arguments used against him by the Directors are exactly those which the Dutch government had recently brought against them, in the affair of the destruction of their armament in 1760; and he refers the Court, in answer to their present plea, to the memorial they lately submitted to his Majesty ; in which, after justly describing the Emperor of Delhi as possessing, beyond very narrow limits, only a nominal power, they observe ; “ The Nabob makes war or peace, without the privity of the Moghul ; that there appears still some remains of the old constitution in the succession to the state of Nabob ; yet, in fact, that the suc-

money paid under the head of this jaghire ; that, therefore, Lord Clive was accountable to them even for the sums he had already received ; that, if the Nabob, Meer Jaffier, had a right to grant the jaghire out of his own revenues, (which, however, the Court of Directors did not admit,) yet as that Nabob had been deposed by the Company's agents, the grant became of no effect.

“ Such were the grounds upon which the right to the jaghire was contested ; and we may judge how very futile they were, by the sentiments entertained of them by all the eminent lawyers of the time ; for the Court of Directors consulted gentlemen of the first reputation in the profession. Among these were Mr. Yorke, the Attorney-general, and Sir Fletcher Norton, the Solicitor-general, the substance of whose opinions was, that it did not appear to be material to enter into such objections as might be made either by the Emperor of Hindoostan or the successors of Meer Jaffier, to the form or substance of the grant of the lands to the Company, or of the

cession is never regulated by the Moghul's appointment : the Nabob in possession is desirous of fortifying his title by the Moghul's confirmation, which the court of Delhi, conscious of its inability to interpose, readily grants. The Nabob of Bengal is, therefore, *de facto*, whatever he may be *de jure*, a sovereign prince.”

reserved rent to Lord Clive ; that they both claimed under the same granter, and that the East India Company could not raise an objection against the grant to Lord Clive, founded on the want of right and power in the Nabob, which would not impeach their own ; that the question was to be considered, not upon the strict absolute words (according to the laws and constitution of the Moghul empire), but relatively as between the East India Company, the grantee of the lands from Meer Jaffier, and Lord Clive, the grantee of the same Nabob, of a rent issuing and reserved out of those lands when granted to the Company ; that the question ought to be determined between his Lordship and the Company upon the same principles as the like question would be determined, arising between the owner of lands in England subject to a rent, and the grantee or assignee of that rent, in a case where both parties derived from the same original granter ; that it was incumbent upon the Court of Directors, in this instance, to turn chancellors against themselves ; and that it was for the honour of that great Company to act upon such principles, not only with foreign merchants, trading companies, and foreign states and sovereigns, but with their own servants.

“ Such was the opinion of the greatest lawyers. But the Court of Directors, actuated, it should

seem, rather by a spirit of resentment than by principles of equity, although they could not hope for a decision in their favour, determined still to withhold the jaghire, and to protract the judgment of Chancery by such stratagems or delays as the forms of judicial proceedings might chance to furnish them with."

Lord Clive complained (and apparently with great justice) of the mode in which this measure relating to his jaghire was to be carried into execution. The letter regarding it was sent to India without any intimation to him ; and when, on hearing that the government of Bengal had been directed to stop all future payments to his agents, he applied to the Court of Directors for a copy of their proceedings in a case so deeply affecting his fortune and his reputation, they peremptorily refused compliance with his request.

Under such circumstances, he had nothing left but to institute (as he did) a suit in Chancery, and to give to his agents abroad the best general instructions his want of minute information enabled him. Mr. Vansittart, the Governor, was his principal agent ; but conceiving that his duty to him and that to his superiors might clash, he desired him on such occurrence to devolve the charge of his interests on Major Carnac, and in case of this gentleman not thinking proper to

act, he nominated Mr. Amyatt, Mr. Lushington, and Mr. Amphlett*, his attornies.

The situation and feelings under which he acted on this remarkable occasion are fully explained in the following letter to Mr. Vansittart :

“ My dear Friend,

“ Last night I received advice that the Directors had sent orders to their President and Council of Bengal to pay into their cash the amount of my jaghire, and not to grant me any bills of exchange on that account. Without enlarging upon this subject, so arbitrary and ungrateful a proceeding will give you a just idea of the principles of those who have the management of the Company’s affairs at present.

“ I am really at a loss what to desire of you about so delicate a matter. Upon the whole, act like an honest man, and a man of honour : do justice to your friend without injuring the Company ; for I am satisfied, the more this affair is inquired into, the more it will be to my honour. At the same time, I am obliged to take every step both against the Directors and the Governor and Council that the law will admit of.

“ Enclosed you will receive a letter to that

* Mr. Amphlett (a connection of Lord Clive) was a civil servant of Bengal ; but his abilities as an engineer had led to his being employed in improving the works at Fort William.

purport, and if you should judge it not improper to act as my attorney on this occasion, I request you will act accordingly. I have sent Carnac a duplicate of the power of attorney sent you by this conveyance, and you will observe I have appointed the Major, Lushington, and Amphlett, to act as may be thought most proper by you and Carnac, with whom I request you will consult on this occasion.

“ If you should find my information not exactly true, and that the Directors allow you some latitude of judging of my right to the jaghire, before you take such a step, these precautions of mine may be laid aside for the present ; but I have too good authority for what I write ; notwithstanding the Directors have refused giving me a copy of the paragraph sent by this conveyance, which I demanded in form.

“ I am, dear Sir,

“ Your affectionate friend and servant,

(Signed) CLIVE.

“ Berkeley Square,

“ April 28th, 1763.

“ *To Henry Vansittart, Esq.*”

In a letter to Major Carnac of the same date, after giving him similar information regarding the conduct of the Directors, he observes : —

“ Your friendship and regard for justice will, I am persuaded, induce you to take every step in support of both my fortune and reputation ;

and the more this affair of the jaghire is inquired into, the more honour it will do me, and make the ingratitude of the Directors appear in blacker light.

“What I wrote you last year is become now absolutely necessary,—that the old Nabob, as well as the present one, should acknowledge my right to the jaghire in the strongest terms. Meer Jaffier will be surprised at this step, and may, if he pleases, address a letter to the Company upon the occasion; a translation of which must be enclosed.

“The opinion of the lawyers is, that the Directors’ orders are illegal; that the President and Council cannot, consistent with their own safety, put them in execution; for which purpose I have addressed a letter to the President and Council, forbidding them to comply with the orders sent them, at their peril.

“Enclosed you will receive a power of attorney to act for me, if you shall think necessary, provided Vansittart should decline it from his being Governor. I have desired Van. to consult with you on this matter; and you will observe that I have nominated Lushington and Amphlett to act as my attorneys, if you should not think it proper, or for my interest, to act for me.

“In case the Governor and Council should retain my money, or refuse giving bills of ex-

change, you (or whoever acts as my attorney) are immediately to commence a suit at law against the Company, and to transmit a very exact account of all your proceedings, that it may be taken up in England. I am not in the least doubt of making the aggressors pay dear for the attempt ; but their purpose will, in some respect, be answered by their lawsuit, as it prevents me becoming a Director next year. However, this will not prevent me from bringing in my friends, which will be the same thing."

Lord Clive wrote to his friend, Mr. Amyatt, in much the same terms : he observes, in the conclusion of this letter*, —

"You, who know the honourable manner in which I acquired my jaghire, will not be wanting to do me justice ; at the same time, do your duty to the Company as far as is consistent with equity and your own safety ; for I tell you very plainly, that if the Governor and Council obey the orders received from the Company, they must do it at their peril, and that I shall immediately commence an action against them by my attorneys in Bengal.

"The letter I send to the Governor and Council, I am persuaded, you will look upon as an act of necessity, in order to save my un-

* 28th April, 1763.

doubted property from the worst of enemies,—a combination of ungrateful Directors.”

From the sentiments entertained and expressed by Mr. Vansittart and Lord Clive's other friends in Bengal, and the result of communications with the Nabob and Emperor*, there is no doubt that every step would have been taken, and every document obtained, that could have confirmed his right to the jaghire; but an arrangement which took place in the ensuing year at the India House rendered all further proceedings unnecessary.

The violent animosities of parties in Bengal, which spread to England, were brought to a crisis, in that country, by intelligence of the dreadful massacre at Patna, and the murder of Mr. Amyatt, and those by whom he was accompanied, at Moorshedabad. These events will be fully noticed in the next chapter. Suffice it here to say, that they produced the greatest alarm in the mind of every one connected with India.

The proprietors now turned all their attention to the state of Bengal; where, besides what had occurred with the native government, the recriminations of the opposed parties among their own servants had brought to light a scene of corruption, division, and distraction in their in-

* The Shah-Zada (Shah Alum) had, before Clive's letters arrived, succeeded to the throne of Delhi.

•
ternal rule, which, if not early remedied, threatened to bring complete ruin upon their affairs, and to disappoint all the golden dreams of profit from their possessions in that quarter of India.

Under such circumstances it is not surprising that the eyes of almost all should have been turned on Clive, as the only person fitted to remedy the mismanagement and misrule of their Indian empire. At a very full General Court he was unanimously solicited to return to India.

At the same time, the proprietors proposed to the Directors the instant restitution of his jaghire; nor can there be a doubt (according to the narrative* now before me) that this vote would have been carried by a great majority; but Lord Clive, who was in Court, not thinking it strictly honourable to take advantage of this sudden spirit of generosity, and to carry, merely by his popularity, a case which was depending at law, rose, and requested they would desist from their liberal intentions; adding, that from being sensible of the impropriety of going abroad whilst so valuable a part of his property remained in dispute, he would make some proposals to the Court of Directors, which would, he trusted, end in an amicable adjustment of this affair.

* MSS. of Sir Henry Strachey.

Lord Clive had now thrown off all disguise with Mr. Sullivan; they were open and irreconcilable opponents. His Lordship, on this occasion, pursued a course quite suited to the boldness and decision of his character. After stating what he had done about the jaghire, he concluded by observing, “ There was another and more weighty obstacle to his undertaking the management of the affairs in Bengal, without the removal of which he thought it incumbent upon him to apprise them of his positive determination to decline entering again into their service: that he differed so much from Mr. Sullivan in opinion of the measures necessary to be taken for the good of the Company, that he could not consider that gentleman as a proper Chairman of the Court of Directors; that it would be in vain for him to exert himself as he ought, in the office of Governor and Commander in Chief of their forces, if his measures were to be thwarted and condemned at home, as they probably would be, by a Court of Directors under the influence of a Chairman, whose conduct, upon many occasions, had evinced his ignorance of East India affairs, and who was also known to be his personal and inveterate enemy; that it was a matter totally indifferent to him, who filled the chair, if Mr. Sullivan did not; but that he could not, consistently with the regard

he had for his own reputation, and the advantages he should be emulous of establishing for the Company, proceed in the appointments with which they had honoured him, if that gentleman continued to have the lead at home.”*

Mr. Sullivan, fearing he might fall a sacrifice to the resolution which he saw the Court entertain of possessing on any terms the services of Lord Clive, and knowing too well the frame of his Lordship's mind to expect any change in sentiments he had so decidedly avowed, rose, and expressed his concurrence in the opinion of the General Court as to the talents of Lord Clive, with whom he could conceive no reason why he should be at variance, it having been his desire to live in friendship with him. After these professions, and some general observations of the same tendency, Mr. Sullivan proceeded to represent the impropriety of superseding (by the civil and military powers proposed to be granted to Lord Clive) Mr. Vansittart, Governor of Bengal, and Major-General Lawrence, who had lately been induced to return to Madras. He also stated the disappointment which the nomination of Lord Clive would create to Mr. Spencer, a Bombay servant lately nominated to the head of affairs at Bengal. But the General Court

* I have extracted this summary of what Lord Clive said upon this subject from the MSS. before quoted.

were in no temper to listen to such reasoning, and with one voice insisted upon the Directors making the appointment. The Directors, as a last resource, desired to try the question by ballot; but the bye-laws of the Company establish that no ballot shall take place except by a requisition of nine proprietors. Though upwards of three hundred were present, this number could not be found to sign their names to such a requisition; and the Court, in consequence, adjourned.

The Court of Directors, thus compelled to attend to the wish of the Court of Proprietors, nominated Lord Clive Governor and Commander in Chief of Bengal. There was some hesitation about the military commission interfering with that of Major-General Lawrence, who, though advanced in years, and infirm, had accompanied his near relation Mr. Palk, when that gentleman was appointed Governor of Madras. But Clive intimated, that it was far from his wish to supersede his old commander: all he required was, that neither Major-General Lawrence nor any other officer should have the power of interfering with his command in Bengal.

Lord Clive received his appointment* within a month of the general election; and the Directors hurried their preparations for his depart-

* March, 1764.

ure, from a desire that he should leave England before that took place; conceiving, no doubt, that his doing so would evince a confidence in their support, and prevent that opposition which several of them expected, on the ground of their known hostility to the popular Governor. A letter was, in consequence, written to Lord Clive by the Secretary, informing him that a ship was ready to receive him. He replied, that, for reasons he had assigned at the General Court, he could not think of embarking, till he knew the result of the election of Directors, which was to take place in the ensuing month. The Directors, when they received this answer, declared that they considered it as a resignation of the government. They therefore summoned a General Court, at which one of the proprietors in their interest moved, that, as Lord Clive declined the government of Bengal, they should proceed to a new nomination; but his Lordship's declaration at the late Court had made too deep an impression to be easily erased. The proprietors saw nothing in his conduct but manly consistency with the sentiments he had before so decidedly avowed; and, on the other hand, viewing the conduct of the Directors as an unworthy artifice to evade compliance with their wishes, they threw out the proposition with violence and clamour.

On the 25th of April, 1764, a very warm contest took place. Mr. Sullivan brought forward one list of twenty-three Directors; and Mr. Rous (who was supported by Clive) produced another. Notwithstanding his friend, Lord Bute, was no longer minister, Mr. Sullivan succeeded in bringing in half his numbers; but we cannot have a stronger proof of the degree in which the attack of Lord Clive had shaken the power of this lately popular Director, than the fact that his own election was only carried by one vote. In the subsequent contest for the chair, Mr. Rous succeeded; and Mr. Bolton, who was also of Clive's party, was nominated his Deputy.

Soon after the election of the Directors, the Court took the subject of the settlement of Lord Clive's jaghire into consideration; and a proposition, made by himself, was agreed to *, con-

* This agreement between the Company and Lord Clive is as follows: —

“ By indenture bearing date the 16th May, 1764, between the United Company of Merchants of England trading to the East Indies on the one part, and Robert Lord Clive on the other part, it is agreed, that the said Company shall, for the term of ten years, cause to be paid to Lord Clive, his administrators, &c. out of their treasury in Bengal, (to be computed from the 5th May, 1764,) the full amount of the said jaghire rents; provided nevertheless, that in case the said Lord Clive should die before the expiration of the said ten years, the Company shall make good the payment of the

firming his right for ten years, if he lived so long, and provided the Company continued, during that period, in possession of the lands from which the revenue was paid.

Lord Clive, previous to his departure, communicated his sentiments to the Directors, very fully, upon all points connected with affairs in Bengal. The subject of his letters will be noticed hereafter. Suffice it to say, that the same emergency which caused his nomination led to his being vested with extraordinary powers; and he was, aided by a committee of persons of his own naming, made independent of his Council. His recommendations of different military officers were also attended to. The King's troops being at this period recalled, all officers in his Majesty's service were ordered to England. Major Cailaud, promoted to the rank of Brigadier-General, had been appointed to Madras; Major Carnac's services were rewarded with a similar commission, and the command of the troops in

jaghire only to the time of the death of him the said Lord Clive; provided also, that in case the Company shall not be in actual possession of the lands out of which the said jaghire issues, and the revenues thereof, to and for their own use, and during the said term of ten years, then and in such case, the said Company shall not be compellable or subject to pay any further part of the jaghire than shall accrue due during the said Company's actual possession of the said lands out of which it issues."

Bengal; Sir Robert Barker was appointed to command the artillery; Majors Richard Smyth and Preston were nominated Lieutenant-Colonels of the European corps; and Major Knox advanced to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, to command the sepoy's:

The victory which Lord Clive obtained at the India House was followed up by his friends, who, on the next general election (1765), strengthened their party among the Directors very considerably; and Mr. Sullivan, notwithstanding the active exertions of his adherents, was again defeated. This success gave Clive the support he required during his short but important administration of the affairs of Bengal. It laid, however, the foundation of the future troubles of his life; for those over whom he now triumphed cherished their resentments*; and their ranks were early recruited by numerous malecontents from India, whom Clive's reforms had either deprived of the means of accumulating wealth, or exposed to obloquy. The efforts of his confederated enemies will be noticed here-

* Mr. Sullivan was not defeated without an active struggle. Mr. Walsh, in a letter to Lord Clive of the 5th April, 1765, speaking of the contest, observes: — "Lord Bute joined him (Mr. Sullivan) very strenuously, and got the Duke of Northumberland to do the same. This change may appear extraordinary; but abject submissions on the one part, and tender solicitations on the other, are said to have brought it about!"

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after: the subject is mentioned here merely as a consequence of his engaging personally in the politics of Leadenhall Street. How far that step was one of wisdom, or of necessity, it is very difficult to determine.

The twenty-four Directors were at this period elected annually; and they had no sooner taken their seats than they were obliged to commence an active canvass to maintain them. Their patronage was the great means by which this was effected; and as that extended to almost every office in India, the value of which rose in proportion to the undue exercise of local authority, the Directors, generally speaking, might be said to derive strength from the continuance of those abuses which, as managers of the Company's concerns, it was their duty to correct. At the period of which I am writing, a great change had taken place in this body. Within the last ten years a number of the servants of the Company had returned to England with large fortunes; all of those bought India stock, to give them weight as proprietors; and many sought the direction, either to support their own interest, or that of their friends. Their efforts to influence elections brought them sometimes into violent collision with each other, but oftener with those classes of individuals who, before this change, had almost wholly mono-

polished the management of the affairs of the East India Company.

To judge from the papers and pamphlets written by the different parties concerned in the general elections, and the means taken to create and influence the votes by ballot, we should pronounce that the India House, at this period, presented, annually, a scene in which there was little more of temper, and decorum of language, than at any popular election in the kingdom. No person better knew the nature of these contests than Lord Clive; and no one could be more anxious to avoid them. The resolution he took and declared, of preserving himself personally clear of them, was communicated to all his friends; and there can be no doubt that he was sincere in desiring to abstain from mixing in a scene where he might lose, but could not gain, reputation. But England is a country where men who require support must give it. Lord Clive had grounds, from his first landing in his native country, to dread an attack upon his fortune. He ascribes (and no doubt justly) the forbearance of his opponents to their dread of his influence, particularly with ministers and at court; but that was now at an end, when his attachment to Mr. Pitt and Mr. Grenville, and his disapprobation of the peace, led him, as we have stated, to reject the overtures of Lord Bute,

when that nobleman added to his power, as the court favourite, that attached to the station of Prime Minister of his country.

Lord Clive, under such circumstances, had no choice between bartering his independence to obtain security to his fortune, and strengthening himself, through other means, in order to resist the attack with which he was threatened. He had many and warm friends among men of the first rank and respectability in England; and a numerous body of Indians were attached to him, either through gratitude, or from admiration of his character. But all these persons had their own objects to serve; and a continuance of their attachment could not have been expected by one who, thinking only of himself, chose to be neutral in affairs which nearly concerned their honour or their interest. To prevent, therefore, his being left defenceless and at the mercy of those in whom he had no confidence, Clive, we must suppose, was compelled to come forward; and, once in the field, defensive measures (however prudent) were altogether unsuited to his character. He immediately became the assailant; and his short but active campaign at the India House, though chequered with defeat and victory, was ultimately successful, from the same causes which had made him so often triumph in very different scenes. His bold,

open, and uncompromising mind gave courage to his friends, and filled with dismay the ranks of his enemies. But never was that good fortune which attended this extraordinary man through life more conspicuous than when it preserved him from sinking into the leader of a party at the India House, and restored him to his proper sphere, to improve and consolidate his former labours, and fix beyond dispute his claim to the title of the Founder of the British Empire in India.

Lord Clive, notwithstanding the opinion he expressed of the imprudence of Mr. Pitt, continued to entertain the greatest veneration for that statesman. In a letter to Major Carnac, he expresses his delight at the feelings of indignation with which Mr. Pitt heard of the conduct of the Directors in stopping the payment of his jaghire. But the person to whom Clive appears to have most completely attached himself was Mr. George Grenville; and the connection between them rested upon principles alike honourable to both. It was by the advice of Mr. Grenville that Clive came to a compromise with the Directors; and he interfered, personally, to bring the dispute between his Lordship and that body to an amicable conclusion.

When Clive left England, he took care to free himself of all political connections, except with

his friend Mr. Grenville ; and he requested the members whom he brought into parliament, and those friends who from gratitude chose to give him their personal aid, to make the support of that statesman the rule of their conduct. We learn these facts from the letters of Mr. Walsh to Clive, after the departure of the latter from England.

In one letter, written when Mr. Grenville was in office, Mr. Walsh observes, “There is no alteration in the administration ; the coldness and jealousy between them and Lord Bute seem to continue, and rather to increase. Your friend Mr. Grenville maintains his ground very well ; indeed he appears to me to confirm his power daily, by his vast application to business, and by the moderation and circumspection with which he conducts himself. He is very sparing of promises, and therefore, as I take it, means to keep those he makes, which is the sure foundation for a durable administration. I am much inclined to think that while he has any influence, there will be no unpopular steps taken by the ministry. The day of the general warrants held till five in the morning, when an amendment that destroyed the motion was carried by a majority of thirty-nine. Before the debate, I spoke to Mr. Grenville, and reminding him of what had passed when you introduced me to him, I

remarked that it was upon such occasions as the present that he had the most want of assistance from his friends; and that I was apprehensive my being no longer neutral, as I was last year, would, instead of being of use to him as I meant it, be of detriment; and that, therefore, I left it to his option, whether I should come down that day or not; upon, which, he very handsomely desired me to come down by all means, and be determined by the merits of the cause, and not only that day, but during the whole session. I accordingly was there, and staid till one in the morning, when the debate, having got amongst the lawyers, grew excessively dull and tedious, and not being very well at the time, I retired without voting at all."

In a subsequent letter*, Mr. Walsh informs Lord Clive of the unexpected change that had taken place in the administration. After describing the different political parties that had arisen, and were likely to arise, he adds, "As to me I do not propose being absolutely of either party; your interest does not appear to me by any means to require it, nor do my inclinations at all lead me to it. Mr. Grenville, it is true, I consider as entitled personally to all your assistance; but his connections are no ways to be justified. The man, therefore, not his party,

* 13th December, 1765.

should have your support, and, agreeably to what you yourself told him in my presence, that your ministerial attachments would cease for ever with his quitting the administration, your plan henceforward should be independency."

Lord Clive had a most tedious voyage to India. The ship put into Rio Janeiro, from whence we find letters to all his friends in England. Constantly alive to every object which affected, in the most remote degree, the interest of his country, he communicated to Mr. Grenville the observations which occurred to him upon the state of the colony, which he had very unexpectedly visited.

"As a well-wisher to my country," he observes*, "I cannot avoid representing to you the deplorable condition of this capital settlement of the Portuguese. I should think myself deserving of everlasting infamy if I did not, with a battalion of infantry, make myself master of Rio Janeiro in twenty-four hours. They have nothing here that deserves the name of fortification: an unflanked garden wall with a rampart, with some old unserviceable and honey-combed cannon, constitute the chief strength of this place; and if the capital be in this defenceless condition, what are we to think of the subordinate settlements on the coast of Brazil. Bad as

* 14th October, 1764.

the Spaniards are, they could not fail, upon a future war, of making a speedy and easy conquest of all the Portuguese possessions in this part of the world, which would be of much more consequence to Spain than the conquest of Portugal. If a hint of their weakness could be conveyed to the court of Portugal, and the reformation already begun there could be extended to the coast of the Brazils, it might be the means of preserving their valuable possessions from falling into the hands of the Spaniards sooner or later."

Mr. Grenville, after he left office, acknowledged the receipt of this letter and some small presents from the Cape. He refers, in this communication, to the change of administration which had so recently occurred; and I quote his observations less from their connection with the life of Clive than from the value which attaches to every sentiment of one of the most honourable and eminent statesmen who belonged to this period of English history.

"I take this opportunity," Mr. Grenville observes*, "of repeating to your Lordship my thanks, for the honour of your letter from the Brazils, and for the sensible and useful observations contained in it; which I immediately endeavoured to make the best use of in my power.

* 14th October, 1765.

I have since then received an account of your very obliging present of some wine, a sea-dog, and some birds from the Cape. The sea-dog was unluckily lost in the voyage home, by jumping overboard, and the birds I have not yet been able to get ; but when I return to town, I shall apply to Mr. Walsh for his assistance. The wine is safely lodged in my cellars, and by the account of it, I make no doubt will prove excellent.

“Your Lordship will have heard long before this letter can reach your hands, of the change which the King has been advised to make in his administration, in consequence of which I have no longer the honour to be in his Majesty’s service. You will certainly have received many comments upon this very sudden (and, from the situation of public affairs when it happened, very unexpected) alteration ; but as I am too nearly concerned in this event to make them, I will only say, that I sincerely wish it may be productive of benefit to the King and to the kingdom, instead of being attended with that confusion and disorder which is generally expected, if the present system should continue, though that is thought not likely. For my own part, I can only say, that I am in the same opinions, and shall endeavour to promote the same plan for the public business out of office, which I did whilst I had the honour to hold

one. In these sentiments, those who are now in his Majesty's service will probably not agree with me; but on the other hand, I have reason to hope for the approbation of those who have done me the honour to approve my conduct. I shall earnestly wish in every situation, to preserve the good opinion and kindness which my friends have so strongly expressed towards me upon the present occasion, and to cultivate the good will and friendship which your Lordship has shown to me. Our accounts here of the state in which you will find affairs in the East Indies are too uncertain for me to be able to make any pertinent observations upon them; I will, therefore, content myself with expressing to you my warmest and most hearty wishes, that you may be attended with the same success and honour to yourself, and the same benefit to the public, in your present command, as your former conduct in those countries so deservedly acquired."

Lord Clive had been flattered during his stay in England, by having a vote passed that his statue should be placed in the India House along with those of General Lawrence and Sir George Pocock. A medal * had also been struck at the

* The following is the account of this medal given by Mr. Stuart (commonly called Athenian Stuart) by whom it was designed. "The medal commemorates the battle of

' ' desire of the Society for Promoting Arts and Commerce, in commemoration of the victory of Plassey, and its great and important results. These honourable marks of regard and respect could not but be gratifying; and, combined as they were with the enjoyment of domestic *

Plassey, and is in honour of Lord Clive. On one side is his Lordship, holding the British standard in one hand, and with the other he bestows the ensign of Subahship on Meer Jaffier. In the space between, are grouped together a globe, a cornucopia, and an antique rudder, to which the legend refers. The cornucopia symbolises the riches with which Meer Jaffier atoned for the injuries done to our countrymen by his predecessor; the rudder is for the augmentation of our navigation and commercial privileges; and the globe, for our territorial acquisitions; all of which were consequences of this victory. In the exergue is written, '*A Soubah given to Bengal.*'

"On the other face of the medal is a victory seated on an elephant, bearing a trophy in one hand, and a palm-branch in the other. The inscription is '*Victory at Plassey,*' '*Clive Commander.*' In the exergue is the date of the victory, and the mark of the Society for Promoting Arts and Commerce."

* In the collection of letters in my possession are many which prove the happiness Lord Clive enjoyed, at this period, in his family; but he was not exempt from severe afflictions. I have before mentioned the loss of an infant boy, when he sailed on his second visit to India. When he left Calcutta in 1760, his youngest boy was so ill, that he could not embark; the child was left in charge of Mr. Fullarton, and died. A daughter, as has been mentioned, was born to Lord Clive after his arrival in England; and Lady Clive, when he sailed, was on the point of being confined again.

happiness, and the society of friends to whom he was attached, they naturally rendered him very reluctant again to leave his native country. The bad health he had for the first twelvemonth after his return made him dread the effects of an English winter; but latterly he appears to have overcome that feeling, though we meet, in his letters, with occasional expressions of despondency, which indicate that depression of spirits consequent on the nervous attacks to which he continued to be subject.

Lord Clive purchased, as his town residence, the lease of the excellent and spacious house, which still belongs to his family, in Berkeley Square. He made several improvements on Styche; but the house and lands being on a limited scale for his fortune, he bought the estate of Walcot, and employed a celebrated architect * to render the mansion suitable to the residence of his family. His kind attentions to his parents appear to have been greater than ever; and when on the eve of returning to India, though his agents' letters show that the purchases he had made and the stoppage of his jaghire had so embarrassed him, that he had no money at command, he generously gave a bond to each of his five sisters for 2,000*l.*, in addition to the present

* Mr. (afterwards Sir Robert) Chambers. •

to the same amount which he had before given them.

Lord Clive carried to India Mr. Strachey, and Captain Maskelyne, a brother to Lady Clive. He exerted his utmost efforts to forward the interests of her other brother, Mr. Nevil Maskelyne of Cambridge; and these efforts, supported as they were by the great science and high character of that gentleman, obtained for him the Regius professorship at Woolwich.*

Mr. George Clive, who (as has been before stated) brought home a moderate fortune, improved it by marriage; and was too comfortably settled to return to India. Mr. Scrafton had become a Director; but his grave duties do not appear to have deprived him of his usual high spirits. In one letter, he warns Lord Clive, that he is now in a different relation to him, being "one of his honourable masters." In another, he gives a humorous account of some of their mutual acquaintances and friends.

"I add this letter," he observes, "to give you an account of that arch Tory Harry†, who, having shook off a load of gout at Mortlake, is come to town so pert, so envenomed with toryism, that he is quite unsufferable. He goes about

* Dr. Nevil Maskelyne is better known as Astronomer-Royal at Greenwich.

† Mr. Harry Clive.

boasting of your Lordship's conversion, abuses Mr. Pitt, impeaching his patriotism and honour, because a private gentleman has left him an estate which he swears he has no right to, and that the will should be set aside, for that the man who made it must have been *non com.*; trumps up the Duchess of Marlborough's legacy, the Hanover millstone, &c. &c.; swears Lord Bute is the only man of merit, and Tories the only true patriots. * * * * Young Walcot has married a parson's daughter *sans un sol*; and Walsh has married a country house, that will run away with more money, and give him more plague, than half the wives in England. Poor Daddy King is half eat up with the gout; has just one hand left to play at cards, and the free use of his tongue, so that he has as much enjoyment of his faculties as if his whole body were at ease."

Lord Clive's friend Mr. Pigot returned to England before his Lordship left it: his fortune* was reported to be very large; and

* Mr. Watts estimated Lord Pigot's fortune at 400,000*l.* It had chiefly been made (according to the same authority) by lending money at high interest to the Nabob, the chiefs, and managers of provinces. This practice was then too common to be considered as in any way discreditable; though it was soon afterwards discovered to be one of the most baneful and injurious to the public interests that the Company could tolerate in any of their servants, but above all, in those high in station.

through the influence it enabled him to establish, he attained first a baronetcy, and afterwards a peerage.

Mr. Orme had settled in England ; and from his correspondence appears (at this time) to have been engaged in finishing the second part of his history. In a letter * now before me, he complains of the obstructions which forms create to his examination of the records of the India House ; while he expresses his hope of meeting more facility from the kind attentions of Lord Clive. Writing to that nobleman, he observes, “ I have had permission to poke into the records of the India House, and have discovered excellent materials for the exordium of my second volume ; but the difficulty of getting them away is immense, for every scrap of an extract that I desire is submitted to the consideration of the Court of Directors ; so that in three months, and after making twenty-five journeys to the House, I have not got half what I want. All because they wo’n’t lend me old books, of which not a soul in England suspected the existence until my rummages discovered them. I am afraid, my Lord, that these gentlemen suspect that I shall make a fortune by my book ; and therefore think all the trouble and impediments I meet

* 21st November, 1764.

with to be what I have no reason to complain of, as it is in the way of trade.

“ You, my Lord, have treated me differently ; and pray continue to do so. Make me a vast map of Bengal, in which not only the outlines of the province, but also the different subdivisions of Burdwan, Beerboom, &c. may be justly marked. Get me a clear idea of the different offices and duties of Duan, Bukhshee, Cadgee, Cutwall, and all other great posts in the government. Take astronomical observations of longitude, if you have any body capable of doing it. I send you a skeleton of the Bengal map I intend for my second volume, and I will hereafter send you the first sheets of the book itself ; which will contain matter entirely new, even to us East Indians ; but that cruel India House, and my paper constitution, keep me back most terribly.”

Among those he had left in India, Lord Clive regarded none with more sincere friendship than Major Carnac* ; and when he feared that that officer would resign the service from disgust at the treatment he had received, he wrote him in the most urgent manner, to take no such precipitate step. He informs him, in one letter†,

* Major Carnac, in 1760, came to St. Helena with Lord Clive, and from thence returned to Bengal.

† June, 1764.

that he had exerted himself to the utmost, and would continue to do so while he lived, to promote his views ; and “ if any accident happens to me,” he adds, “ I have left you an annuity of 300*l.* per annum.”

Mr. Amyatt had established himself very high in the opinion of Lord Clive, with whom he maintained, for several years, a very intimate correspondence, to which frequent reference has been made. Lord Clive thought equally well of this gentleman’s talent and integrity ; and was deeply grieved at hearing of his death. He had, it is true, recommended Mr. Vansittart to be his successor, in preference to Mr. Amyatt ; but the latter was quite satisfied that this was done from a conscientious conviction of Mr. Vansittart’s superior competency to the station ; and he knew that Lord Clive had endeavoured, though unsuccessfully, to obtain for him the succession of the government of Bengal, which had been given to Mr. Spencer, a member of Council at Bombay, a gentleman whom Clive had recommended to be at the head of his own presidency, but against whose present nomination he remonstrated in the strongest manner, on the ground of his abilities and character (though respectable) not being such as to warrant the supersession of so many civil servants at Bengal, and particularly of Mr. Amyatt.

We have often had occasion to notice the intimate footing on which Clive had lived for many years with Mr. Vansittart, and the high opinion he entertained of his virtue and abilities. Though condemning the dethronement of Meer Jaffier, he ascribed the chief blame of that measure to Mr. Holwell, and believed that his friend Van. (as he termed him) had acted from necessity: but when Cossim Ali was left uncontrolled to pursue his own course, and the Governor, acting on the system of non-interference with the Nabob's authority, abandoned to his mercy the rich Hindus and others, who had long looked to the English for protection, Clive was unqualified in his condemnation of a policy which he deemed calculated to injure the reputation, and with it the strength, of the British Government. The opinions he gave on this subject were in direct opposition to those contained in the minutes and memorials published by Mr. Vansittart in defence of his conduct; and their wide difference on a subject of such importance led to their being of opposite parties in the India House.

Mr. Sullivan became the advocate of Mr. Vansittart, whose modesty, moderation, and great virtue he contrasted with the bold, grasping ambition of Lord Clive; and this circumstance, more than any other, tended to loosen those

bonds by which the two friends had been so long united.

When persons are in the situation of Lord Clive and Mr. Vansittart, every trifle obtains importance, and serves to widen the breach. Lord Clive appears to have been, during the whole of his residence in England, very desirous to establish himself well at court. Among other attentions, he studied to gratify the curiosity of the King, by obtaining for him some of the most remarkable animals of the East. He wrote* several times to Mr. Vansittart to aid him in this object. Some time after his application, Lord Clive received a letter from that gentleman, intimating that he had sent home two elephants†, a rhinoceros, and a Persian mare, which he requested his Lordship would, along with his brother, Mr. Arthur Vansittart, present to his Majesty.

When these animals reached England, Mr. A.

* One of Lord Clive's letters to Mr. Vansittart is dated 17th December, 1762. The passage alluded to is as follows: —“ I must again repeat my desire of having a large elephant embarked for his Majesty, if the thing be practicable, of which you must be a better judge than I, who are upon the spot; and if you can send me any curiosities, such as antelopes, hog-deer, nilgows or lynxes, I shall be much obliged to you.”

† One of the elephants was so large that it could not be embarked.

Vansittart requested Lord Clive would accompany him to court, to present them. The following answer to this letter shows the first impression which this transaction made upon his Lordship's mind.

“Upon the receipt of your letter,” Lord Clive observes, “enclosing a copy of a paragraph from your brother, I can plainly perceive, that Mr. Vansittart, declining to comply with the request I made him, of purchasing and sending home, on my account, an elephant, to be presented to his Majesty by me, has taken that hint to send one home on his own. This unkind treatment I neither deserved nor expected from Mr. Vansittart. I am persuaded his Majesty will not think I am wanting in that respect which is due to him, if I decline presenting, in another person's name, an elephant which I intended to present in my own. At the same time, I shall take care his Majesty be informed of the cause of my desiring to be excused attending you to his Majesty, with Mr. Vansittart's presents.”

An explanation took place upon this subject ; and it appears by a letter * from Lord Clive to

* In this letter, which is dated January, 1764, Lord Clive observes ; “ I am sorry there should be any mistake about the elephant ; and although I was somewhat affected at first at the commission you gave me to present the elephant to

• •
 Mr. Vansittart in the following year, that some blame attached to the captain of the ship, who acted, according to Lord Clive's opinion, at the instigation of Mr. Sullivan. But it is a justice we owe to the memory of the latter gentleman to state, that Lord Clive was in such a frame of mind at the time he listened to this accusation, as readily to believe that every thing (whether public or private) which tended to annoy or injure him originated with or was aggravated by, his rival for supremacy at the India House.

Though several causes combined to interrupt that cordiality which had once subsisted between Lord Clive and Mr. Vansittart, no open rupture took place. The latter had left Calcutta before his successor arrived, and returned to his native country with a moderate fortune*, and a character for integrity that was never impeached, even by those who censured most severely the weakness and impolicy of many measures of his government.

Lord Clive, in the hurry of leaving England,

his Majesty in your name, instead of my own, yet the thing in itself appears to me to be of too trifling a nature for either of us to think any more about it. Your brother will inform you in what manner Sampson has acted, owing, I believe, to the instigation of Sullivan."

* Mr. Walsh writes to Lord Clive, that Mr. Vansittart told him his fortune did not exceed 2,500*l.* per annum.

forgot to include Mr. Call, the chief engineer at Madras (with Mr. Campbell* and Mr. Preston), in his recommendation for a brevet commission as Colonel. He wrote† from Rio Janeiro to the Chairman, Mr. Rous, entreating he would rectify his mistake, and prevent so excellent an officer being hurt by neglect. In the same letter he called his attention, in a very forcible manner, to the merits of Colonel Forde.

“If Caillaud,” he observes, “should not go to the coast of Coromandel, pray do not forget Colonel Forde, who is a brave, meritorious, and honest officer. He was offered a jaghire by the Subah of the Deckan, but declined taking it upon terms contrary to the interest of the Company. Lord Clive, General Lawrence, and Colonel Coote, have received marks of the Directors’ approbation and esteem; Colonel Forde has received none. The two captains who fought and took the Dutch ships in the Ganges received each a piece of plate; but Colonel Forde, the conqueror of Masulipatam, who rendered the Company a much greater service by the total defeat of all the Dutch land forces in Bengal, has not been distinguished by any mark of the Company’s favour.”

* Afterwards Sir Archibald Campbell, Governor of Fort St. George.

† 14th October, 1761.

I here close the account of Clive's second visit to his native country, in which he resided more than three years. I have been minute in relating the events of this period. They had, both as they related to the friendships he formed and improved, and the hostility which his open and warm temper provoked, a serious influence upon his future career ; and a knowledge of them is quite essential, both to the developement of his character, and to the understanding of the subsequent part of these volumes.

CHAP. XIII.

BEFORE resuming the narrative of Clive's life, and accompanying him on his last visit to India, it will be necessary to take a general and concise view of the events which had occurred in that country during the short period of his absence. It would, indeed, be impossible, without such a review, to understand the nature of the scenes in which he became engaged, or the motives and grounds of the measures he adopted.

He was succeeded in the administration of the affairs of Bengal by Mr. Vansittart; who, as he owed his elevation to Clive, was disposed, we may conclude, to pursue the course of policy which Clive had marked out. But however easy it may be for a man of moderate talent to follow genius in a smooth and beaten track, it becomes impossible, where the road is rugged and indistinct, and where the slightest deviation leads inevitably to the widest separation from him who preceded.

This was the case with Mr. Vansittart. He had a clear perception between right and wrong, in the abstract; but his letters and minutes,

soon after he was appointed governor, show that he was quite incompetent to take a comprehensive view of the great and conflicting interests committed to his charge, and still less to quell the violent passions that were in action. He found evils of much magnitude, and he conscientiously desired to remedy them; but he appears to have looked no further, and, consequently, to have often exchanged bad for worse. Volumes have been written for and against the measures he adopted: they will be here noticed only in a very cursory manner.

I have stated, in the tenth chapter, that at the period of time when Clive sailed for England, accounts had been received of the advance of the Shah-Zada towards Patna; and that Colonel Caillaud had been detached with a force to aid Ram Narrain in repelling the invasion. Alumgeer the Second had been murdered by his minister, Umad-ul-Moolk*; and the Shah-Zada†, on becoming emperor, had assumed the title of Shah-Alum‡; nominating, at the same time, Sujah-u-Dowlah (the ruler of Oude) his vizier.

The young emperor was successful in his first action with Ram Narrain; but the latter being reinforced by Colonel Caillaud and Meeran, the

* More commonly called Ghazee-u-Deen.

† Prince Royal.

‡ Shah Alum signifies "King of the World."

invaders were, in their turn, defeated *, and compelled to retire from before Patna. The Emperor, however, instead of retiring towards Benares, took the route of Moorshedabad, whither he was pursued, and obliged to retrace his steps ; and, after another ineffectual attempt to take Patna, he retreated to Hindoostan. The triumph of the Nabob's arms was completed by the defeat of the rebel Raja of Purneah, by Captain Knox ; but, in the midst of these successes, an event occurred, which became the proximate cause of another revolution in Bengal. The Prince Meeran, who has occupied so conspicuous a part in this narrative, was killed † by lightning. This violent young man had been at once the support and dread of the less energetic Meer Jaffier. Though Meeran was sensible of the necessity of the aid of the English, he was impatient of the state of dependence and control in which the alliance with that nation had placed him ; and the continual conflict of his interests and passions rendered him turbulent and dangerous. To Clive, alone, he was obedient ; and a sentiment of attachment and respect for that commander appears, on many occasions, to have checked him in schemes that must have terminated fatally for himself, or his father. This prince, with all his vices and er-

* 22d February, 1760.

† 2d July, 1760.

rors, was generous to his dependents and army ; who, after his death, afraid of losing their arrears, surrounded the palace, and threatened the life of their sovereign, against whom many of his dependents took up arms ; and, as if the misfortunes of the country were to be complete, it was visited by a predatory incursion of the Mahrattas.

Amid these scenes of war, mutiny, rebellion, and plunder, Mr. Vansittart assumed the government of Bengal.* Mr. Holwell, who had been in temporary charge, cherished the greatest prejudice against the reigning Nabob. Meer Jaffier was, according to him, the author of all these evils ; and so entirely did he succeed in impressing the new governor with the same sentiments that, within two months† from Mr. Vansittart's arrival at Calcutta, a treaty was concluded with Meer Cossim Ali, son-in-law to the Nabob, the general of the army, engaging that the Nabob should invest him with full power as ruler of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa ; in return for which, he made over to the Company the fruitful provinces of Burdwan, Midnapore, and Chittagong.

The ostensible causes of this revolution are honestly, indeed, but not very satisfactorily,

* August, 1760.

† This treaty was concluded on the 27th September.

stated by the Governor himself in his narrative*, and seem to have been chiefly the financial difficulties of the Company's affairs. The Nabob was to a certain extent in arrear, and other pressures were felt. "The season had now begun," says Mr. Vansittart, "when our forces were to take the field against a powerful enemy, whilst we had scarce a rupee in our treasury to enable us to put them in motion. The easy channel in which the Company's affairs ran, whilst the sums stipulated by the treaty (with Meer Jaffier) lasted, had diverted their attention from the distresses which must unavoidably fall on them, whenever that fund should be exhausted; and continuing to act on the same extensive plan in which they set out, they now found themselves surrounded by numerous difficulties, which were heightened by the particular circumstances of the country at this period, and weighed down with the very advantages which they had acquired; that is, an establishment which had lost the foundation on which it was built; a military force proportioned to their connections and influence in the country without the means of subsistence; a fortification begun upon the same extensive plan, at a vast expence; and an alliance with a power unable to support itself, and threatening to involve them in the same ruin."

Mr. Vansittart adds, that had indolence and weakness been the Nabob's only faults, destructive as they were to the welfare of the country and of the Company, he would have felt more severely the necessity of measures the tendency of which was to dissolve the engagements between him and the Company; but that in addition to this, he found a general disaffection to his government and detestation of his person and principles in all ranks of people. Even from this representation of the person principally concerned in the revolution, it is plain that the measure "of not only breaking a solemn treaty without previous warning and negotiation with the prince with whom it was contracted, but even of dethroning that prince, without attempting to remedy by some convention the temporary evils complained of, was a rash and unjustifiable measure, particularly where the change and all the articles of the new treaty were so obviously for the advantage of one of the parties only."

The Governor went to Moorshedabad in the hope of persuading Meer Jaffier to resign a power which he endeavoured to convince him he was alike unfit and unworthy to use, and to place it in the hands of Cossim Ali, who was his nearest connection, and the commander of his army. We cannot be surprised that the Nabob should indignantly repulse these attempts to

render him the willing instrument of his own degradation. He refused to be associated, in any way, with the proposed arrangements for the better government of his dominions; and stipulated for nothing but permission to retire to Calcutta, that his life might be safe from that danger to which it must be exposed, if he remained at his own capital. His request was granted; and Cossim Ali was proclaimed Nabob.*

* A curious and minute account of the progressive steps taken in effecting this revolution is given in a letter to Clive (dated the 3d December, 1760,) from Mr. Lushington, who held the situation of linguist to the army, and who was an eye-witness of the incidents he describes. After detailing Mr. Vansittart's visit to Moorshedabad accompanied by a hundred and eighty Europeans, six hundred sepoy, and four pieces of cannon, that force might be used in case Meer Jaffer should refuse to comply with his demands, and mentioning that he had delivered to the Nabob three letters explanatory of his intentions, to which he waited a final answer, Mr. Lushington proceeds: — "We waited all the next day; but no answer coming, the Governor thought it proper not to lose any time, and therefore ordered Colonel Caillaud to go by water with his detachment, so early that he might surround the palace at daybreak; sending at the same time a letter, acquainting the Nabob that he had sent the Colonel to settle those affairs which he had conferred with him about, and to which he had promised to give an answer, but none was brought. The Nabob sent word to the Colonel he would give no answer until the troops returned to Moradabad, as he never expected such treatment from the English. Some few conferences were afterwards held by Mr. Hastings and myself with several of the Nabob's ministers; but as nothing could be agreed on I was sent back to Moradabad, to give

The character of this chief stood high before his elevation. Of the crime of guilty ambition,

an account of our proceedings to the Governor, and to have his final order whether we should storm the palace in case the Nabob refused to comply. He answered he wished not to spill the blood of a man whom he raised to such dignities, but that the affair must be finished before sunset. With this I returned; and found, to my great surprise, Cossim Ali Khan's standards, and the nobits^a beating in his name. Colonel Caillaud now told me that the Nabob had sent out the seals to his son-in-law, and offered to resign the government if the English would be security for his life. This was immediately agreed to, and a meeting was held between the Colonel and the Nabob, who made the following speech, as well as I can remember: — 'The English placed me on the musnud; you may depose me if you please. You have thought proper to break your engagements. I would not mine. Had I such designs I could have raised twenty thousand men, and fought you if I pleased. My son, the Chuta Nabob (Meeran), forewarned me of all this. I desire you will either send me to Sabut Jung (Lord Clive), for he will do me justice, or let me go to Mecca; if not, let me go to Calcutta; for I will not stay in this place. You will, I suppose, let me have my women and children; therefore, let me have budgerows and be carried immediately to Moraudbaug.' The Governor saw him soon after this, and he made much the same speech to him, adding, he could be nowhere safe but under the English protection."

That Mr. Lushington did not concur very cordially in the measures described, may be inferred from his concluding observations. "The Company," he observes, "are to receive the countries of Burdwan, Midnapore, and Chittagong, for this service. I, therefore, should be glad to know how this Nabob will be any more able to pay his people than the old man, after having given away a third part of his revenues."

it is vain to think of clearing him ; but if he afterwards committed the greatest atrocities, and if his memory has become, from his cruel deeds, an object of just abhorrence with the English, it must not be forgotten that he was stung to madness, by the conduct of individuals of that nation ; that he was rashly raised to power, by men who could not support him in its exercise, and driven to extremities by others, who, in the pursuit of their own interests and political views, appear to have thought all means justifiable, that could accelerate his downfall.

There is no page in our Indian history so revolting as the four years of the weak and inefficient rule of Mr. Vansittart. He was, as an individual, virtuous and respectable, and his intentions were pure ; but these personal qualities were altogether insufficient to carry him through such a scene as that in which he became involved. His apologists have imputed his failure to the want of support from his associates in power, to that spirit of cupidity and rapacity, which had been kindled by the successes of Clive, and to the hopes and intrigues of the natives, which were cherished and excited to action by those that were hostile to the Governor and his plans.

These assertions are all true, but they only serve to prove the want of that superiority of mind, that spirit of command in Mr. Vansittart,

which would have enabled him to sway the minds of his own countrymen, as well as the want of that foresight which should have led him to abstain from the adoption of measures extremely questionable in themselves, and which he did not very clearly see that he could carry through. The only ground of apology for *him*, and that not a very sufficient one, is, that he allowed himself to be surprised in adopting the measure at all; and that even in the instrument which he employed for executing the work, he was deceived in the character of Meer Cossim, whose financial skill and ferocious energy were both equally unforeseen. The truth, however, is, that many of the acts of Mr. Vansittart's administration were less his own than those of a selfish and domineering council.

The first year of the new Nabob's reign was marked by success against his foreign enemies. Major Carnac, who now commanded the English troops in Bengal, defeated the Emperor at Gyah; and a rebellion of the chief of Beerboom and Burdwan was repressed by the aid of a detachment under Major Yorke. Major Carnac, who had obtained just reputation from his military operations, had acquired more with the natives of India by his generous treatment of M. Law, who was compelled to surrender to him, and by his humane and politic behaviour

to the unfortunate emperor, whom he had defeated, but whom he afterwards waited upon and attended as one of his subjects.

The courteous behaviour of Major Carnac to the French commander excited, according to the author of the *Seer Mutakhareen*, equal astonishment and admiration. We cannot refrain from giving an account of the surrender and treatment of M. Law in the words of the native historian.*

“When the Emperor left the field of battle, the handful of troops that followed M. Law, discouraged by this flight, and tired of the wandering life which they had hitherto led in his service, turned about likewise and followed the Emperor. M. Law, finding himself abandoned and alone, resolved not to turn his back; he bestrode one of his guns, and remained firm in that posture, waiting for the moment of his death. This being reported to Major Carnac, he detached himself from his main, with Captain Knox and some other officers, and he advanced to the man on the gun, without taking with him either a guard or any Telingas (sepoys) at all. Being arrived near, this troop alighted from their horses, and pulling their caps from their heads, they swept the air with them, as if to make him a *salam*; and this salute being re-

* *Seer Mutakhareen*, vol. ii. p. 164.

turned by M. Law in the same manner, some parley in their language ensued. The Major, after paying high encomiums to M. Law for his perseverance, conduct, and bravery, added these words: — ‘ You have done every thing which could be expected from a brave man ; and your name shall be undoubtedly transmitted to posterity by the pen of history ; now loosen your sword from your loins, come amongst us, and abandon all thoughts of contending with the English.’ The other answered, ‘ that if they would accept of his surrendering himself just as he was, he had no objection ; but that as to surrendering himself with the disgrace of being without his sword, it was a shame he would never submit to ; and that they might take his life if they were not satisfied with that condition.’ The English commanders, admiring his firmness, consented to his surrendering himself in the manner he wished ; after which the Major, with his officers, shook hands with him, in their European manner, and every sentiment of enmity was instantly dismissed on both sides. At the same time the Major sent for his own palankeen, made him sit in it, and he was sent to camp. M. Law, unwilling to see, or to be seen, shut up the curtains of the palankeen for fear of being recognised by any of his friends at camp ; but yet some of his acquaintances,

hearing of his being arrived, went to him. The Major, who had excused him from appearing in public, informed them that they could not see him for some days, as he was too much vexed to receive any company. Ahmed Khan Koreishee, who was an impertinent talker, having come to look at him, thought to pay his court to the English by joking on the man's defeat; a behaviour that has nothing strange, if we consider the times in which we live, and the company he was accustomed to frequent; and it was in that notion of his, doubtless, that with much pertness of voice and air, he asked him this question; 'And Beeby (Lady) Law, where is she?' The Major and the officers present, shocked at the impropriety of the question, reprimanded him with a severe look and very severe expressions: 'This man,' they said, 'has fought bravely, and deserves the attention of all brave men; the impertinences which you have been offering him may be customary amongst your friends and nation, but cannot be suffered in ours, which has it for a standing rule, never to offer an injury to a vanquished foe.' Ahmed Khan, checked by this reprimand, held his tongue, and did not answer a word. He tarried about one hour more in his visit, and then went away much abashed; and, although he was a commander of importance, and one to whom much honour had

been always paid, no one did speak to him any more, or made a show of standing up at his departure. This reprimand did much honour to the English ; and it must be acknowledged, to the honour of those strangers, that as their conduct in war and in battle is worthy of admiration, so, on the other hand, nothing is more modest and more becoming than their behaviour to an enemy, whether in the heat of action, or in the pride of success and victory. These people seem to act entirely according to the rules observed by our ancient commanders, and our men of genius."

The Emperor of Delhi this year* invested Cossim Ali as Subadar of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa ; the latter agreeing to pay an annual tribute of twenty-four lacs. The aid of the English was desired to fix the Emperor upon the throne of Delhi ; and in return, an offer was made of the Dewanee of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa ; but, though the project was entertained at Calcutta, the want of funds for the expedition, and alarm at the embarrassments in which it might involve the Company, prevented its acceptance.

The consequence of the success of his arms, was a desire, on the part of the Nabob, to avail himself of it to confirm his power, and to en-

able him not only to raise funds to discharge the heavy burdens imposed upon him as the price of his elevation, but to enrich himself. No means appeared more likely to effect these ends than the plunder of Ram Narrain, the celebrated governor of Patna. Mr. Vansittart had anticipated this desire, and had furnished Major Carnac with orders to protect a man, who had so often merited, and so often received pledges of protection from the British government. Happy would it have been for the English name and interests, had the Governor persevered in this resolution! — but deceived by the artful representations of Cossim Ali, and irritated by the opposition and remonstrances of Major Carnac, who had (as his friend Clive thought *, most unnecessarily,) joined his opponents, Mr. Van-

* In a letter to Major Carnac, dated the 7th of May, 1762, Clive observes, "Although I am convinced of the goodness of your heart and intentions, yet there is a warmth and fire in your disposition which often carries you beyond the rules of prudence; and, whatever your friends in India may say of the letter you sent the Board, I wish you never had wrote it, for it gives room to such designing men as Sullivan to do you more prejudice than you can imagine."

The same sentiments had been previously expressed by Clive, in a letter to Mr. Vausittart, 3d of February, 1762. "I am most heartily concerned," he says, "that Carnac has been induced to take part with your enemies in the Council. He has an excellent heart, and a very good understanding; but the warmth of his temper in this instance has got the better of both."

sittart appointed Colonel Coote to the command of the troops at Patna, as preparatory to abandoning its ruler. But Coote, like Carnac, refused to be passive, much less to be the instrument of a measure which they both deemed a violation of pledged faith to an individual; and as such, derogatory to the honour, and injurious to the interests of the British nation. The consequence of this opposition, which, however laudable the motives, was quite indefensible in military officers, was the removal of Colonel Coote; after which Ram Narrain was seized, but no wealth was found in his possession. His imprisonment, and subsequent execution, by order of Meer Cossim Ali brought just reproach upon the English government: for nothing but direct rebellion, or the most flagrant violation of his duty, could have warranted the abandonment of one whom we had so repeatedly, and so specifically, guaranteed against the apprehended avarice and resentment of his superior's passions, which were aggravated by the protection that policy had compelled us to give to this Hindoo ruler. That the conduct of Cossim Ali was not to be anticipated, is a weak and inadmissible excuse. The faith of the British nation should not have been committed to such hands: for if there exists one ground of strength more than another to our empire in India, it is the strict

maintenance of such guarantees as that which had been given to Ram Narrain. They can never be made without creating hostility in the parties whose power they limit, or to whose interests they are, or seem to be, opposed. Every artifice, and every effort, therefore, will be used to induce us to break them ; and when we do so, we may be satisfied, that we lose more of real strength, by every such act, than can be gained by the most brilliant victory.

One of the chief causes of the discord which prevailed in Bengal was the exemption from duties on their private trade, claimed by the Company's civil servants, who at that period were remunerated by their trade rather than their salaries. The system of collecting customs on the transit of goods in the interior of the country prevailed all over India ; and in Bengal much inconvenience was felt, and many quarrels arose, from the number of tolls and inspections to which the Company's goods were liable, in common with all others, in their transit to and from the marts of purchase and sale. To obviate these, it was arranged with the Nabobs, in explanation of the Emperor's firman, that the Company's flag and *dustuck* *, in their boats

* *Dustuck*, a permit, exempting goods from the payment of duties.

and other conveyances, should secure their goods from search ; and as their trade consisted solely of goods from foreign parts for sale in the country, or of country goods for foreign exportation, the privilege only partially interfered with the trade of the interior. While the Nabobs and their officers were in full power, any abuse of this privilege was easily checked. But when, after the accession of Meer Jaffier, the English had become all-powerful, and it was dangerous to interfere with their acts, or to question their proceedings, the Company's servants, who had still the privilege of trading on their own account, not only covered their private adventures, by passports under the Company's name, but all their servants and dependents claimed an exemption from internal duties on the same plea, and besides entered deeply into the internal trade of the country. During the vigorous administration of Clive such attempts had been rare ; but when all fear of correction was lost in the increasing weakness of his successors in the government, men set no limits to their efforts to enrich themselves. The Nabob's revenue was injured, and his authority insulted, in every quarter of his dominions, by the exemptions claimed for the trade of European agents, and the respect demanded for the persons of the lowest of their servants. Against their pretensions and excesses

he made the most forcible remonstrance, but in vain. Many of the persons of whom he complained were members of Council ; and it was not surprising, therefore, that difficulties should occur in any attempt made by the Governor to check and reform such abuses. Cossim Ali became impatient of delay ; and finding his representations produce no effect, and that the orders of the government were either evaded or disobeyed, he himself took, and authorized measures of violence, that increased the discontent and hostility of the party opposed to Mr. Vansittart ; many of whom were the persons chiefly benefited by the abuses complained of, who represented him as leaving British subjects and public servants of the Company at the will and mercy of a capricious tyrant whom he had unjustly raised to the throne.

To remedy these evils, Mr. Vansittart negotiated a treaty, by which, while some advantages were left to the servants of the Company, many of the privileges they had claimed were done away. This treaty, though exceptionable in some of its clauses, might have operated well, had Mr. Vansittart's Council been disposed to listen to reason, and had Cossim Ali been more temperate. Trusting to his judicious and active administration of the customs as one of the

sources out of which he was to discharge the heavy pecuniary obligations under which he had come to the English, he adopted the strictest measures for enforcing their collection. The adjudication and enforcement of all fiscal demands by the articles of the treaty had (unfortunately as affairs stood) been left to the Nabob's officers. Numerous collisions instantly ensued in all parts of the country. "In truth," says Mr. Verelst*, a dispassionate observer, "it soon became a personal quarrel. Meer Cossim, in the orders issued to his officers, distinguished between the trade of his friends, and of those who opposed him, treating individuals with indecent reproach." The opponents of Mr. Vansittart, who thought their interest injured, and who now formed the majority of Council, combined in measures which soon led to an open rupture.

So excessive were the claims made by the English and their native servants, for carrying their goods free from the duties paid by the Nabob's own subjects, that the whole commerce of the country was thrown into confusion, and ruin was threatened to the Nabob's finances. As a measure of justice to his own subjects, and to prevent the daily breaches of the peace which occurred, he saw no remedy left, but to abolish all customs in his dominions. An order was

* Verelst's View, p. 47.

accordingly issued abolishing all tolls and customs for the space of two years.

This act of the Nabob, though extorted by necessity, and so injurious to his own revenue, was loudly exclaimed against as an infringement of his engagements with the Company; and two agents * were sent to demand its annulment. But before they could adjust differences, events were brought to a crisis, principally through the impressions made upon the Nabob's mind by the conduct of the majority of the Council.†

* Mr. Hall and Mr. Amyatt.

† "The question is," Mr. Vansittart observes, in a letter to Clive, dated the 25th of February, 1763, "whether the salt, beetle-nut, and tobacco trade shall be carried on with the Company's dustuck, or pay duties to the country government, and go with their dustuck. I am of the latter opinion, and assured the Nabob I would not grant dustucks for these articles, but that myself and any other English gentlemen who had a mind to trade in them, should pay the government's duties and take out their dustuck. This, and some rules I proposed for restraining the overgrown power of the English gomastahs employed in carrying on this trade, and giving the officers of the government their due authority, were disapproved by the rest of the Council; and it was resolved to call down the members from the subordinates to make the necessary regulations upon these points at a full board. * * * * Where the abuses will end I know not; for where the Nabob's officers have the power and the courage to oppose and prevent the unlawful attempts of our gomastahs, they are not contented with that, but, in their turn, oppress and injure in a most extravagant and insufferable manner, so that it is a difficult matter to keep a proper balance; and I shall be obliged to you if you will take an

Mr. Vansittart informs Lord Clive of his measures for regulating trade ; but states his appre-

opportunity of giving Mr. Sullivan your sentiments on the subject."

A very different view of this subject is taken by Major Carnac. In a letter to Clive, dated the 26th of February, 1763, he observes : " Mr. Vansittart's interview with the Nabob, instead of removing our grievances, has occasioned their being exceedingly multiplied and carried beyond sufferance. He, in conjunction with Mr. Hastings, without consulting the rest of the Board, established a set of regulations, whereby a duty of 9 per cent. is laid upon all articles of inland trade without exception ; and the disputes of our gomastahs and others in our employ are subjected to the decisions of the Nabob's officers. These concessions are so evidently shameful and disadvantageous to us, that it is not to be conceived they could ever have been submitted to, except by persons who were bought into them ; and, indeed, it is confidently asserted, and generally believed, that Mr. Vansittart got seven lacs by his visit to Mongyr. The members of the Council, then at Calcutta, passed a severe minute of censure upon the President's procedure, and summoned the absent members, in order to devise a speedy and effectual remedy for the complaints received from every quarter. They have been some time assembled, and have absolutely forbid the regulations being complied with, and have issued out orders to repel by force any insults that shall in future be offered, or obstructions to our trade. It is, indeed, high time," he adds, " to upset the ruinous system which Mr. Vansittart has so industriously endeavoured to establish : by a strange contradiction, he deposes one Nabob under pretence of mal-administration, and then asserts the successor to be independent, and master of his own actions, and uses all possible means to render him so, and to increase his power. We have so sensibly felt the ill use made thereof by Cossim

hensions of the result. These were but 'too fully verified. The Nabob, alarmed by the assembly of all the Council from the out-stations, and outraged by their seizure of some aumils (or revenue officers) for the performance of his orders, became most violent, and was rendered more so from the daily reports of the conduct of Mr. Ellis, chief of Patna, who, from the first, had been the determined opponent of his elevation. A knowledge of the disposition, and a belief of the hostile intentions of this public agent, led him to stop two boats proceeding to Patna with arms; and he added to this act of aggression a demand for the removal of Mr. Ellis, and the English detachment from Patna. This conduct was regarded as very little short of an open declaration of war; and as such, it was treated by the majority of the Council, who issued orders to Mr. Ellis, giving him the power (if he thought it right to exercise it) to anticipate the Nabob's hostile designs by seizing upon the citadel of Patna. The reins of government had fallen from the hands of Mr. Vansittart, and were guided by a selfish and sordid majority.

Ali Khan, that the man must be wilfully blind who does not see the necessity of immediately checking his career, and the consequences that must result from his being suffered to run on." From these observations, it may safely be concluded, that the gallant Major was a better soldier than statesman.

It was in vain that Mr. Vansittart and Mr. Warren Hastings protested against giving such discretionary power to a man known to be so violent. They too truly anticipated the result. At the very moment Cossim Ali (alarmed at having proceeded too far) released the boats, he heard of the Fort of Patna being surprised and taken by the English troops, acting under the orders of Mr. Ellis. Though it was immediately re-taken by his troops, Cossim Ali's rage, at what he deemed a treacherous commencement of hostilities, knew no bounds; and throwing away the scabbard, he became furious in his resentment against the whole English nation, and all who had adhered to them. Mr. Amyatt*,

* The following letter, dated the 15th of June, 1763, which we find entered in the copy book of Mr. Amyatt, was meant to report to Mr. Vansittart the failure of his mission. The original never reached its destination. "I am favoured with yours of the 8th and 9th instant. We waited on the Nabob, and delivered him your letter: he was highly incensed, and expressed great contempt for us and our forces, and told us he expected nothing else than a war; that we might go and remain at our tents till we received the Council's orders, and then signify the same to him by writing — which he supposed would be much the same as your letters to him; if so, he should dismiss us, but expected Mr. Hay to remain a hostage till those prisoners we had of his were released. The stopping our arms is not equal to the seizing his aumils, he says; and our troops being in his pay, they shall not remain at Patna; and peace or war depended on their removal, which he found would not be the case. All my

one of the deputies sent to Monghyr, was murdered on his way back to Calcutta. To Ram Narrain's death was added the execution of the two Hindu Seits (or bankers), who had always been supposed attached to the English interests; and notwithstanding the entreaties and threats of the Governor, and the more direct menaces of Major Adams, commanding the British forces, he glutted his vengeance with the deliberate murder of Mr. Ellis and all the English (except one) who had been taken prisoners at Patna. Their numbers amounted to one hundred and fifty, of whom fifty were military or civil officers.

Subsequently to this act of atrocity*, Cossim Ali and the German†, Sumroo, (who had been

endeavours to establish a friendship and confidence have been in vain; nor can I convince him we did not intend breaking with him, or to disgrace him by being obliged to seize his aumils, but necessitated so to do. He seemed inclined to quarrel, or rather resolved we shall have no influence, or free intercourse, or trade through his country, but what he pleases. I have had a very disagreeable time with him, and shall be heartily glad when free from this embassy, which I have, to the utmost of my power, endeavoured to conclude, in bringing about a lasting peace and friendship, and reconcile the Nabob to every body; but to no purpose, nor can it be effected."

* 1763.

† A well-informed friend of the author remarks, that he was not a German, but a Frenchman or Swiss, of the name

the instrument of the massacre,) fled before the British troops, and found refuge in the territories of Oude. Sujah-u-Dowlah, the prince of that country, not only refused to deliver them up on the demand of the British commander, but, acting as an ally of Cossim Ali, advanced to attack the English army, then under Major Munro, from whom he received a signal defeat at Buxar. He was afterwards pursued into his own country, and again discomfited, though he had been joined by the Mahratta chief, Mulhar Row Holkar. So situated, this ruler adopted a very politic and decided course. He would not, he said, bring a stain upon his honour, by surrendering men who had sought his protection; but he commanded Cossim Ali and Sumroo to quit his dominions, and repaired to the British camp, throwing himself entirely upon the clemency of his enemy. To this he was chiefly induced by the accounts which had been received of the return of Clive, whom he could not hope to oppose, and whose resentment he hoped to disarm by unqualified submission. His conduct and character were represented in the most favourable light by Major Carnac, who earnestly recommended that he should be treated with

of *Sombre*, which, perhaps, had been his *nom-de-guerre* when in the French service.

generosity, and confirmed in his dominions. Such a measure, this sensible and liberal officer remarked, would be more beneficial to our interests and reputation, than any change we could make in this quarter of India.

The events that have been described led to the re-elevation of Meer Jaffier to the Musnud ; and we must, therefore, shortly revert to the history of that prince.

Before Clive left India, Meer Jaffier had committed many acts that might have been construed into infractions of the treaty with the English, and more, that, strictly viewed, would have proved him ill suited for the high station to which he had been raised : but Clive considered that his conduct was less to be attributed to his character, which was weak and vacillating, than to the galling nature of his dependent condition ; and as the relations between the Nabob of Moorshedabad and the English could not be changed, without danger to the very existence of the latter, he judged wisely, that, while Meer Jaffier abstained from hostility, however glaring his defects, any change in the head of the native government would be impolitic, and attended with consequences alike injurious to the reputation and interests of the British government.

The departure of Clive was the most serious

of all misfortunes to Meer Jaffier. He required the most liberal toleration that enlarged policy could give to his measures. He had, besides, a respect for the character and a dread of the displeasure of Clive, which operated as a check upon his excesses. Mr. Holwell (the temporary successor to Clive) could not succeed to his influence over the mind of the Nabob, whose want of personal deference must have aggravated the bad impressions the new governor appears to have previously entertained of his character. But, though Mr. Holwell has laboured to prove that Meer Jaffier, subsequent to his combination with the Dutch, carried on a correspondence with the Shah-Zada hostile to the English, the fact is not clearly established; and if it were, the sound principles that regulated the conduct of Clive would have led to its being passed over. The unhappy death of Meeran, however, was the event which tended most to accelerate the revolution. It threw, as has been shown, the army and country into equal confusion; and the step taken by the Nabob of elevating his nearest connection* and most efficient military leader, Cossim Ali, to the condition before held by his son, proved the proximate cause of his ruin.

Cossim Ali's ambition was of too active a nature to render him content to await the death

* Cossim Ali was his son-in-law.

of his father-in-law and benefactor; and he found, in the distracted state of the Nabob's government, and in the prejudices of those intrusted with the administration of the Company's affairs in Bengal, ample grounds to proceed upon. He had also recourse to what he no doubt deemed more certain means of effecting his object. He promised (and the promise was afterwards made good*), large sums to those of the select committee who had favoured his elevation. He anxiously desired to extend his gifts to the members of the committee who were opposed to the measures of the Governor; but they rejected his offers, and made such rejection a

* Mr. Vansittart, in his communications with the Nabob, rejected this present previous to the treaty, as it might appear the price of its stipulations: but he intimated, at the same time, that there would be no objection to such present after the obligations of the treaty were fulfilled. The following is a list of the presents acknowledged to have been received on this occasion:—

Mr. Vansittart	-	rupees 500,000	-	£58,333
Mr. Sumner	-	240,000	-	28,000
Mr. Holwell	-	270,000	-	30,937
Mr. M'Guire	-	180,000	-	20,625
Mr. Smyth	-	134,000	-	15,354
Major Yorke	-	134,000	-	15,354
General Caillaud	-	200,000	-	22,916
Mr. M'Guire	-	75,000	-	8,750
				<hr/>
				£200,269
				<hr/>

Vide Parl. Reports, vol. iii. p. 311.

strong ground of the sincerity of that protest * which they had entered against the proceedings of the Governor and his party on this memorable occasion.

The letter written by the secret committee of Bengal to the Court of Directors, at the period of Clive's departure for England, has been already noticed. It was, of course, deemed most contumacious; and as a mark of their displeasure, the Court dismissed from their service the four civil councillors.† Three of those dismissed were zealous supporters of Mr. Vansittart; and their removal threw the power into the hands of a majority, whose violence, in their opposition to him and Cossim Ali, led to measures which precipitated the rupture with the latter, and all the horrid acts by which it was attended.

On the breaking out of the war, the restoration of Meer Jaffier was urged by the majority of the Council; and when the excesses of Cossim Ali put an end to all hopes of a settlement with him, Mr. Vansittart and Mr. Hastings, who were at first opposed to the measure, concurred in it. The re-elevation was attended with few changes. He confirmed the concessions‡ made

* This protest, which is in the form of a letter, is dated the 11th of March, 1762. — Vide Parl. Rep., vol. iii. p. 252.

† Messrs. Holwell, Pleydell, Sumner, and M'Guire.

‡ The provinces of Burdwan, Midnapore, and Chittagong.

by Cossim Ali, and restored the advantages of trade to the English which that prince had taken from them. Meer Jaffier survived his restoration to power but a short period; and that was disturbed by mutinies in his army, and by the intrigues and corruption of his court. He imputed all his misfortunes to the absence of Clive; and he anxiously desired to protract his existence till the arrival of one, whom, notwithstanding all their disputes and differences, he appears throughout to have considered as his only true friend. The gratification of his wish was denied him. He died a few months before Clive's arrival*; but the warm and often-expressed sentiments of Meer Jaffier, on this point, show that he was neither destitute of good feeling nor discernment. The sincerity of his attachment was proved by the last act of his life, which was to leave a legacy to his friend. The amount and destination of this bequest shall be hereafter mentioned.

On the death of Meer Jaffier, doubts arose as to his successor. The first claimant was Nujum-ud-Dowla, a youth of twenty, and son of the deceased; and the second, his grandson (the son of Meeran), who was only six years of age. After some deliberation, the decision was in favour of the former.

* February 6. 1765.

By the treaty * concluded with this prince, the military defence of the country entirely devolved upon the English ; the Nabob agreeing to keep no more troops than were necessary for purposes of parade. The most remarkable feature of this arrangement was, the agreement of the young Nabob to appoint, with the advice and concurrence of the English government, a Naib Subah (or vicegerent), to conduct the civil administration of his country. At the time when Meer Jaffier was restored, the choice of his minister was, of course, considered as being of the greatest importance. While at Calcutta, he proposed to appoint to that office Nundcomar†, a Hindu of the worst character. To this Mr. Vansittart strongly objected, recommending Mahommed Reza Khan, a Mahommedan noble of talent and of reputed integrity, but who was opposed (probably for those very qualifications) by the intriguing and corrupt faction which had long governed the court of Moorshedabad. The Nabob soon after left Calcutta, when Nundcomar followed ; and, in spite of Mr. Vansittart's remonstrances, being supported by the

* February, 1765.

† This man has been before mentioned. He was justly objectionable to the British government on account of the various intrigues and treasons in which he had been detected ; and was imprisoned at Calcutta for his correspondence with its enemies during the reign of Cossim Ali.

majority in Council opposed to the Governor, he was intrusted with the direction of the Nabob's affairs. Mr. Vansittart had left Bengal before the death of Meer Jaffier; on which event, by the treaty that followed, Mahommed Reza Khan (then at Dacca) was elevated to the rank of Naib Subah to his successor, Nujum-ud-Dowla.*

Mr. Vansittart, or rather his council, has been reproached† (as Clive was) for making Nabobs, without any reference or respect for the legitimate authority of the Emperor of Delhi, or his Vizier, Sujah-u-Dowla. But however politic it might have been to have gained the sanction of such authorities after the measure was adopted, a previous application would have been the height of folly and of weakness. Whatever latitude of interference, or right of approbation, had been given to the Emperor or his minister, would assuredly have been exercised for venal and ambitious purposes; and the embarrassments, that must ever attend such pro-

* Vide Mill's *British India*, vol. iii. p. 318.

† There is some confusion in Mr. Mill's account of this transaction (vol. iii. p. 330.), from that accurate historian having overlooked the fact, that the appointment of Nujum-ud-Dowla was managed by Mr. Spencer and his council, Mr. Vansittart having previously set out for Europe. — See 3d Report of Committee of 1773, p. 21.; and Scott's *Hist. of Bengal*, vol. ii. pp. 439—447.

ceedings, would have been multiplied tenfold. Sujah-u-Dowla, it is true, upbraided the English with their conduct in this particular. He accused them of casting down and putting up Nabobs at their pleasure ; but this was to gain opinion, and afford a pretext for the hostilities he meditated against their power. The very chief who made this accusation was the proclaimed minister and servant of the Emperor ; but he yielded him neither obedience, nor a participation in the revenues of the wide and rich territories of Oude. Names and forms, as connected with the different relations of authority in the empire of India, continued to be observed, and were so far of importance ; but, as connected with the substance of power, they had been, for a long period, wholly neglected ; and though we may agree with the historical antiquary, who judges from the principles of times long past, and looks only to the theory of Indian government, that the English were wrong, yet, if we take a dispassionate and comprehensive view of the actual condition of India, we must, I conceive, not only deem them defensible upon this point, but pronounce that, under the circumstances in which they were placed, it was quite impracticable for the local authorities at Calcutta to pursue any other line, without sacrificing the interests committed to their care, and

greatly increasing the anarchy and bloodshed in the country, regarding the administration of which the disputes existed.*

The changes that took place at Madras during Clive's absence from India have little relation to these Memoirs, as that presidency continued, during his second administration, almost unconnected with Bengal. Suffice it, therefore, to say, that the power of the English Nabob (as he was termed), Mahommed Ali Khan, was fully established†; the strong fortress of Vellore was besieged, and taken from Mortiz Ali Khan, and part of the Carnatic was assigned, as a jaghire, to the Company.

Another event occurred during this period‡, which created a great sensation. The gallant Mahommed Esoof, who had so greatly distinguished himself in the early campaigns of Lawrence and Clive, had been continued in the management of Madura and Tinnevely, which he had been the chief instrument of reducing to order. He was, in this situation, subject to the Nabob, to whom, and those around him, he was not long in becoming an object of jealousy and hatred. The defalcation of revenue from

* An exception must be made of the deposition of Meer Jaffier : Suraj-u-Dowla, and Cossim Ali respectively forfeited their authority in consequence of their unsuccessful attempts to destroy the power of the English.

† 1763.

‡ 1764.

exhausted countries, and the haughty replies made by a proud soldier to reproaches, added to the preparations he made to guard against the designs of those he justly deemed his enemies, furnished ample pretexts for accusing him of malversation and rebellion. The Company's troops were combined with those of the Nabob for his reduction ; which was not, however, effected, without great waste of blood and treasure, and at last accomplished by an act of treachery. A Frenchman in his service, of the name of Marchand, betrayed him ; and he was put to death by the Nabob, Mahommed Ali. This gallant soldier, no doubt, became a rebel to the prince he served ; but he may be deemed, in some respects, the victim of those disputes for power which ran so high, at this period, between the English and the Nabob. Mr. Pigot, according to Mahommed Ali, forced Mahommed Esoof upon him as the manager of the countries of Madura and Tinnevelly ; and by his support and countenance encouraged him in acts of contumacy and disobedience. Educated as the Vellore Subadar had been, and knowing that the real power was vested in the English, he appears to have looked exclusively to them, and to have paid little attention to one he considered as having no more than a nominal authority. But the departure for England of his friend Mr. Pigot, and the

succession of Mr. Palk, whose policy conceded to the Nabob the real dominion of his country, left Mahommed Esoof without hope ; and, in the desperate struggle he made for his life, the former faithful soldier of the English not only corresponded with their enemies, the French, against whom he had so often and so gallantly fought, but declared himself the subject, and displayed in his fort and country the banners, of that nation. This last act of his life has not deprived his memory of the honours that belong to it, as the bravest and ablest of all the native soldiers that ever served the English in India.

Mr. Palk, formerly clergyman at Fort Saint David, who had risen, by his moderation, good sense, and experience, to different offices of government, was, when Clive returned to India, Governor of Madras. His appointment to this station induced his friend and near connection, General Lawrence, to quit his retreat, and revisit, as commander of the troops, the scene of his former fame.

At Calcutta, Mr. Spencer from Bombay had succeeded to Mr. Vansittart. He was governor at the time of the elevation of Nujum-ud-Dowla, and participated in the money* that was distributed on that occasion. These presents have

* Vide Parliamentary Reports, vol. iii. p. 312.

been justly arraigned, as furnishing powerful motives to the Company's servants for making revolutions by which they were enriched ; and it is one of the heaviest charges against Clive, that his example was the origin of this baneful practice. The fact is not disputed ; but it happened in this case, as in most others, where small men attempt to imitate great, that they reach only the defects, and fail in every other part.

The princely presents which Clive merited and received were the rewards of great services rendered to the parties by whom they were given, and in which his first efforts were prompted by considerations that were decidedly uninfluenced by sordid motives. Add to this, that whatever he undertook prospered, and that all the individuals whom he elevated he preserved, not only from their native enemies, but from the still more galling encroachments and rapacity of the Company's servants. By such acts he won the good opinion of all ranks in India. From the King to the peasant the name of Clive inspired sentiments of respect and confidence.

What a contrast was presented by his successors in power ! Money for themselves was, in every engagement, one of the stipulations, and *appeared*, though in some cases it might not have *been*, the leading motive of their measures. All

their measures failed : every one connected with them was ruined. The character for good faith, which at Clive's departure stood so high, was lost. No one trusted the word of an Englishman. Many of those who engaged in these scenes were able and virtuous ; but there was no leading genius among them. The jealousy and party spirit that pervaded the government at home multiplied checks and cherished insubordination in those abroad ; till nothing was heard but accusations and recriminations.

The army, both European and native, had fallen into a very insubordinate and mutinous state. The officers evinced this spirit on almost every occasion where they deemed their personal interests affected ; and many of the privates deserted to the native powers. A most serious mutiny occurred at the period when Major Munro took the command of the army* at Patna. A battalion of sepoys left camp to join the enemy : they were intercepted by a body of troops, and twenty-four of the ringleaders were brought before a native court-martial, and sentenced to death. They were all executed ; and we are informed by an officer who was present, that an incident occurred on this occasion, which not only created a great sensation at the moment, but left a lasting impression on the native soldiers of

Bengal, being truly characteristic of their proud and dauntless spirit.

When the orders were given to tie four of these men to the guns, from which they were to be blown, four grenadiers stepped out and demanded the priority of suffering, as “a right,” they said, “which belonged to men who had always been first in the post of danger.” The calm manner in which this request was made, and the anxiety that it should be granted, excited great sympathy in all who beheld it. The officer * on whose authority this fact is stated, and who was an eye-witness of the scene, observes; “I belonged on this occasion to a detachment of marines. They were hardened fellows, and some of them had been of the execution party that shot Admiral Byng; yet they could not refrain from tears at the fate and conduct of these gallant grenadier sepoys.”

When a strong sense of imminent danger, and a fear of total ruin to the affairs of the Company and of the English nation in Bengal, excited universal attention and alarm, all eyes were naturally turned on Clive, as the only human being who could restore the reputation and interests of this nation in India. He was in consequence, as has been stated, called upon to proceed once more to that country, and he had courage to obey the

* Captain Williams' Memoir of the Bengal Native Army.

call, though convinced that the scene presented difficulties which were almost insurmountable, and that he would have to perform duties that were personally invidious, and calculated not only to interrupt but to destroy all his prospects of future enjoyment.

There can be no doubt that Clive, in consenting, under such circumstances, to return to India, was chiefly, if not solely, actuated by an honourable ambition, and by an ardent desire to promote the interests and glory of his country. His first stipulation, however, was, that his stay should be limited to a very short period ; and he pledged himself (and the pledge, as will be shown hereafter, was nobly redeemed) not to enrich himself one farthing by any pay or emoluments he might receive from the high station to which he was nominated.

Though Clive had been restrained by many considerations, as well as by the rapidity of events, from taking personally any decided part in the disputes in Bengal, he had not been an unconcerned observer of those scenes. Each party had addressed him with an equal solicitude that he should approve and support them ; but we do not meet in his private correspondence with any full expression of his sentiments. He regretted, it appears from his letters, the removal of Meer Jaffier from the throne ; but uninformed

of the minute circumstances that had produced that measure, he did not withdraw his confidence in the wisdom of the administration of one, whom he so highly valued as Mr. Vansittart, till he saw him depart step by step from all those maxims of policy he had laid down as the rules of his own conduct, both in regard to native princes and other men of rank and consequence in India.

The opposition of his views to those of his successor, as well as his own difficulties, are clearly expressed in a letter he wrote to the Court of Directors immediately before his embarkation.

“ In obedience to your commands,” Lord Clive observes*, “ I now transmit the purport of what I had the honour to represent to you by word of mouth at the last Court of Directors, with some other particulars which slipped my memory at that time.

“ Having taken into consideration your letter sent me by the Secretary, as also the request of the General Court of Proprietors, I think myself bound in honour to accept the charge of your affairs in Bengal, provided you will cooperate with, and assist me in such a manner that I may be able to answer the expectations and intentions of the General Court.

* This letter is dated 27th April, 1764.

“ As an individual, I can have no temptation to undertake this arduous task, and nothing but the desire I have to be useful to my country, and to manifest my gratitude to this Company, could make me embark in this service, attended as it is with so many inconveniences to myself and my family. I cannot avoid acknowledging that I quit my native country with some degree of regret and diffidence, on leaving behind me (as I certainly do) a very divided and distracted Direction, at a time, too, when unanimity is more than ever requisite for the carrying into execution such plans as are absolutely necessary to the well-being of the Company.

“ I shall now enter into a short discussion of your political, commercial, and military affairs in Bengal. Without searching into the causes of the unhappy revolution in favour of Cossim Ali Khan, I shall only remark, that if the same plan of politics had been pursued, after he was placed upon the throne, as that which I had observed towards his predecessor, he might with great ease have remained there to this day, without having it in his power to injure either himself or the Company in the manner he has lately done. Indeed, Mr. Vansittart's ideas in politics have differed so widely from mine, that either the one or the other must have been totally in the wrong. Soon after Cossim Ali Khan was

raised to his new dignity, he was suffered to retire to a very great distance from his capital, that our influence might be felt and dreaded as little as possible by him :— he was suffered to dismiss all those old officers who had any connection with, or dependence upon us ; and, what was the worst of all, our faithful friend and ally, Ram Narrain, the Nabob of Patna, was given up ; the doctrine of the Subadar's independency was adopted, and every method was put in practice to confirm him in it. We need seek for no other causes of the war, for it is now some time that things have been carried to such lengths abroad, that either the princes of the country must, in a great measure, be dependent on us, or we totally so on them.* That the public and continued disapprobation of Cossim Ali Khan's advancement to the government, expressed by the gentlemen of Calcutta, increased the Nabob's jealousy, is most true ; and that it was the duty of every one, after the revolution was once effected, to concur heartily in every measure to support it, cannot be denied. It is likewise true, that the encroachments made upon the Nabob's prescriptive rights by the Governor and Council, and the rest of the servants trading in the articles of salt, beetle, and tobacco, to-

* Clive's clear and practical mind here puts the question on its real basis. There is no other alternative.

gether with the power given by Mr. Vansittart to subject our gomastahs (or agents) to the jurisdiction and inspection of the country government, all concurred to hasten and bring on the late troubles; but still the groundwork of the whole was the Nabob's independency. It is impossible to rely on the moderation and justice of Mussulmen. Strict and impartial justice should ever be observed; but let that justice come from ourselves. The trade, therefore, of salt, betle, and tobacco having been one cause of the present disputes, I hope these articles will be restored to the Nabob, and your servants absolutely forbid to trade in them. This will be striking at the root of the evil. The prohibition of dustucks to your junior servants will, I hope, tend to restore that economy which is so necessary in your service. Indeed, if some method be not thought of, and your Council do not heartily co-operate with your Governor to prevent the sudden acquisition of fortunes, which has taken place of late, the Company's affairs must greatly suffer. What power it may be proper to vest me with, to remedy those great and growing evils, will merit your serious consideration. As a means to alleviate in some measure the dissatisfaction that such restrictions upon the commercial advantages of your servants may occasion in them, it is my full inten-

tion not to engage in any kind of trade myself; so that they will divide amongst them what used to be the Governor's portion of commercial advantages, which was always very considerable."

Clive then proceeds to offer some observations upon the state of the Company's military affairs in Bengal; and suggests the necessity of keeping up an European force of four, or, at least, three thousand men.* While he pays a just tribute to the high character of the Indian army, and to the honour they had gained by their gallant exploits, he laments the want of due obedience and subordination, so essential to the interests of the service. To remedy this (which was rendered more necessary by the removal of the King's troops at this time), he recommends an immediate increase of field officers; and points out to the Court the different individuals, who, from their character and services, had the strongest claims upon their notice.

"I would recommend," he observes, "the appointing three field officers to every battalion, a colonel, lieutenant-colonel, and major; and the officers I would choose to command the bat-

* "For the good of the Company," Clive observes in the letter already quoted, "I would propose that you should always have, in Bengal, four, or at least three, thousand Europeans; to consist of three battalions of seven hundred each; four companies of artillery of one hundred each; and five hundred light horse."

talions should be Majors Carnac, Richard Smith, and Preston. You have already done justice to Major Carnac's character by reinstating him in the command of your forces in Bengal, and by acknowledging his services in the most public manner. This gentleman will, I flatter myself, stand as high in your esteem as Brigadier General Caillaud ; and will, I hope, have the same rank and appointments. The military merits of the other two gentlemen you are likewise well acquainted with, having both received from the Court marks of approbation for their distinguished services. To command your artillery I would recommend Sir Robert Barker, whose abilities in that department have been exceeded by no officer that ever was in your service. Your sepoy's are already commanded by Major Knox, whose merits I could wish to have rewarded with a lieutenant-colonel's commission. Your horse, when raised, should be commanded by a lieutenant-colonel, or major.

“ I have very strong reasons to wish this idea of regimenting your troops may take place ; for without such a subordination I shall not be able to enforce your orders for the reduction of your military expenses, which have been a constant dead-weight, and have swallowed up your revenues. I could wish, that whatever emoluments are unavoidable may fall to those few who, hav-

ing been long, are high in your service, whether civil or military. Thus will the expense be scarce felt by the Company, in comparison to what it is at present, when, for want of due subordination, every one thinks himself entitled to every advantage; and the juniors in your service be excited to exert themselves, from a certain knowledge that application and abilities only can restore them to their native country with fortunes honourably acquired."

In concluding the subject of military affairs, Clive submits to the consideration of the Court his ideas and opinions on the proper mode of levying troops in England. The method pursued at this period he considered to be, in many respects, objectionable. In order that due attention might be paid to the selection of recruits, and to insure, at all times, a proper supply of efficient men, to meet any unexpected demands that might arise in cases of sudden emergency, he suggests, that the Company should apply to his Majesty for permission to maintain two battalions, of five hundred men each, in England, with a proper proportion of officers; and, as a reward to the important services of Colonel Coote and Colonel Forde, he recommends that these two officers should be nominated to command them.

Clive appears to have referred much of the

spirit of opposition that arose in Bengal to the jealousy among the public servants of that presidency of appointments, which they deemed supersessions, of civilians from Madras and Bombay, to be governors of Bengal.

“The heart-burnings and disputes,” he observes, “which seem to have spread and overrun your settlement of Calcutta, arose, I must fear, originally, from your appointment of Mr. Vansittart to the government of Bengal from another settlement; although his promotion was the effect of my recommendation. The appointment, therefore, of Mr. Spencer, from Bombay, can only tend to inflame these dissensions, and to destroy all those advantages which the Company only can expect from harmony and unanimity amongst their servants abroad. The resignation of Messrs. Verelst, Cartier, and many others of the senior servants, which must be the consequence of Mr. Spencer’s appointment, will deprive me of those very gentlemen on whose assistance I depend for re-establishing your affairs in Bengal.”

The following letter from Clive relates to the same subjects, and contains too many sound observations and wise reflections upon the actual state of the affairs of India at this period to be omitted. Though the Court of Directors did not comply with the wish of Clive, that he

should have the power (since vested in Indian governors) of acting, when occasion demanded, upon his own responsibility, they did what was almost tantamount, — they vested the power required in a select committee*, composed of persons from whom he had no opposition to apprehend, and who were competent to all acts of administration, independent of the other members of Council.

“ I shall not enter,” Clive observes, “ into the motives which caused the deposition of Meer Jaffier, nor into the fundamental cause of the present war with Cossim Ali Khan. It is sufficient to say, that these two events have lost us all the confidence of the natives. To restore this, ought to be our principal object ; and the best means will, in my opinion, be by establishing a moderation in the advantages which may be reserved for the Company, or allotted to individuals in their service.

“ If ideas of conquest were to be the rule of our conduct, I foresee that we should, by necessity, be led from acquisition to acquisition, until we had the whole empire up in arms against us ; and whilst we lay under the great disadvantage of fighting without a single ally, (for

* This select committee was composed of Lord Clive, General Carnac, Mr. Verelst, Mr. Sunner, and Mr. Sykes. The two latter accompanied Lord Clive from England.

who could wish us well?) the natives, left without European allies, would find, in their own resources, means of carrying on war against us in a much more soldierly manner than they ever thought of when their reliance on European allies encouraged their natural indolence. The last battle fought against Cossim Ali Khan is a proof of this assertion, for never did the troops of India fight so well.

“Nothing, therefore, but extreme necessity, ought to induce us to extend our ideas of territorial acquisitions beyond the amount of those ceded by Cossim Ali Khan, in his treaty with Vansittart. This necessity can only arise from finding that nobody will trust us; and that the people of the country are determined to try their strength with us to the utmost.

“But by this system of moderation it is not intended that the Nabob should be left entirely independent of us. The moment he fancies himself in this situation he will look upon us as enemies who have taken too much from him, and whom it will be necessary, either to reduce to our ancient state of mere merchants, or to extirpate. This, therefore, was the error of Mr. Vansittart’s conduct: he advised the Nabob to regulate his treasury, save money, to form and discipline an excellent army, and to pay them well and regularly, contrary to the practice of all

the princes of India. By following this advice punctually, Cossim Ali, in two years, thought himself in a condition to bid us defiance, and was near being so.

“It ought, therefore, to be our plan to convince the Nabob that our troops are his best, his only support against foreign enemies; and that our friendship will be his best support against the plots and revolutions of his own officers. Necessitated, by the extent of his dominions, to repose large governments and great trusts in particular men, jealousies will be perpetually subsisting. On the nice and disinterested management of these will depend our importance. The principal officers must be convinced that we will protect them from any capricious violences of their sovereign; and, on the other hand, the Nabob must be convinced, that we will give them up to his just resentment the moment their ambition alone leads them to strike at him.

“To carry this balance with an even hand, the strictest integrity will be necessary in every one who shall have a vote in your councils abroad. I found myself every day assaulted by large offers of presents, from the principal men of the province, not to support the Nabob in resolutions contrary to their interests; and from the Nabob, to sacrifice them to his capricious resentments.

“ But even this conduct alone will not be sufficient to keep us from giving umbrage. During Mr. Vansittart’s government, all your servants thought themselves entitled to take large shares in the monopolies of salt, beetle, and tobacco, the three articles, next to grain, of greatest consumption in the empire. The odium of seeing such monopolies in the hands of foreigners need not be insisted on; but this is not the only inconvenience: it is productive of another, equally, if not more prejudicial to the Company’s interests; it enables many of your servants to obtain, very suddenly, fortunes greater than those which in former times were thought a sufficient reward for a long continuance in your service. Hence these gentlemen, thus suddenly enriched, think of nothing but of returning to enjoy their fortunes in England, and leave your affairs in the hands of young men, whose sanguine expectations are inflamed by the examples of those who have just left them.

“ This, therefore, will be the greatest difficulty which I shall have to encounter; to persuade, or, if necessary, to oblige your servants to be content with advantages much inferior to those which, by the prescription of some years, they may think themselves entitled to. Yet if this is not done, your affairs can never be settled on a judicious and permanent plan. My fortunes,

my family, and the other advantages I may be possessed of, will naturally make me wish to accomplish my intentions for the Company's service abroad as soon as possible, that I may return to my native country, which, it cannot be imagined, that I quit without some regrets ; but if I should meet in your councils abroad men whom private interest may render averse to my maxims, I shall, perhaps, instead of settling your affairs as may be expected from me, find myself harassed and over-ruled in every measure by a majority against me in council.

“It therefore rests with the Court of Directors to consider, seriously, whether they should not intrust me with a dispensing power in the civil and political affairs ; so that whensoever I may think proper to take any resolution entirely upon myself that resolution is to take place. The French Company gave Mr. Godeheu sole and absolute control over all their settlements to the east of the Cape of Good Hope, at a time when their affairs were not in a worse condition than ours are at present. In India we ourselves have had examples of supervisors. I myself was intrusted with great powers by the gentlemen of Madras, when I went down to Bengal against Suraj-u-Dowlah : the use which I made of these powers will, I hope, justify my opinion, that I may, without danger, be intrusted with an au-

thority so highly necessary at present. The occasions of exerting it will rarely happen, but will certainly happen at times, when all may be lost for want of it. Moderation, I will venture to say, was always a part of my character in political concerns; and as a means to induce the gentlemen abroad to contract their views of private advantage within the bounds essentially necessary to the interests of the Company, the first step I shall take will be, to give up to them every commercial advantage, as I did during my last residence in Bengal. I need not mention that these advantages are, to a Governor, great, and adequate to his station.

“To prevent dissensions, I am willing to receive a military commission inferior to General Lawrence’s; but that gentleman has received from the Court of Directors so very extensive a power over all their forces in India, that the presidency, at which he resides, is, in fact, little less than the residence of a Governor-general over all your settlements in India. If ever the appointment of such an officer as Governor-general should become necessary, it is evident that he ought to be established in Bengal, as the greatest weight of your civil, commercial, political, and military affairs will always be in that province. It cannot, therefore, be expected that I should be subject to have any part of the mili-

tary forces allotted for that province recalled or withheld from me at the will of an officer in another part of India ; or that even the presence of that officer in Bengal should, in any way, interfere with my military authority in that province. It will likewise be necessary (at least until affairs in Bengal are restored to perfect tranquillity) that whatever troops, treasures, or other consignments may be destined from England to that presidency, shall not, as usual, be stopped and employed by any of the other presidencies at which they may chance to arrive in their passage towards the Ganges."

Such was the prospect, and such were the anticipations, with which Clive proceeded to India. The task was arduous, but his mind was resolved on its full performance ; and the next chapter will show that his efforts were more than sufficient to surmount the obstacles that were opposed to his success, although they proved even greater than he had apprehended.

CHAP. XIV.

WE have already adverted to the state of confusion in which affairs were at Bengal when Lord Clive landed.

Never had an individual a more arduous task of reform; but he came to it with great local knowledge, with a full acquaintance with the characters of those by whom he was likely to be aided or thwarted, and with a mind determined at all hazards to execute the great work to which he had been called, almost by acclamation.

The public letters, papers, and minutes which were laid before Parliament, regarding the transactions in Bengal, during the years 1765 and 1766, illustrated as they are by the debates of 1772, gave a full and accurate history of those two years; but it is in his volumes of private letters, more than even in any public documents, that we must look for the motives of Clive's conduct, during this most eventful period of his life. These are so numerous, that it is difficult to select from them such as will best give, in his own language, a just idea of the difficulties which he had to combat, and of that

unyielding firmness and determined resolution by which they were overcome.

He writes to his friend General Carnac, under date the 3d May, 1765 : —

“ I arrived here this morning to take possession of a government, which I find in a more distracted state, if possible, than I had reason to expect.

“ The measures taken, with regard to the country government, have been at best precipitate; and the gentlemen here, knowing that the arrangement of all affairs was absolutely vested in the committee, might, I think, have avoided going the lengths they have, till my arrival. But I am determined not to be embarrassed by the errors of others, if in my power to remedy them. At least, I will struggle hard that the disinterested purpose of my voyage prove not ineffectual. Your resolution, my dear friend, and principles, almost unparalleled in these climes, will, I am sure, co-operate with me in every regulation for the public good. Verelst appears, as far as I can hitherto judge, to be a man of honour and integrity. Sykes may be thoroughly relied on, and Sumner must, for his own sake, be a friend to the Company. It is impossible, therefore, to doubt that we shall be able to settle every matter to the satisfaction of our employers. The young Nabob should be

treated with respect, with dignity, and with that honour which ought to be characteristic of Englishmen in Asia as well as in Europe ; but since we have experienced such a series of troubles from the mismanagement of Subahships, it is our duty to guard against future evils, by doing for ourselves what no Nabob will ever do for us ; and never trust to the ambition of any Mussulman whatever, after what has happened. Peace upon a firm and lasting foundation must be established if possible. And to obtain this object, I conclude it will be necessary for me to march up to you at camp, not to continue long there, but to enter into some treaty with the King. Your long and extensive expedition I could wish had been avoidable ; but of that and all other affairs I will speak more at large, when I have the pleasure of hearing from or seeing you. For the present, I can only say, that our views ought to be confined to Bengal and its departments, and so far I am sure may be gone with justice ; nor do I doubt, that a committee of gentlemen, whose emulation is not excited by the distribution of loaves and fishes, may acquire at this juncture immortal honour to themselves, and lasting advantages to the Company. To-morrow morning I begin to read over the papers, and minutes of Council, that I may, by seeing what has been done, be able to form a clearer opinion

of the plan we ought now to adopt. 'This business will, I suppose, employ my attention for two or three days, and then you shall hear from me.'

In a letter to the same officer, under date the 6th May, Clive observes : —

“ I shall now inform you of this day's proceedings. Having met in Council, after some debates, the field officers were established as follows : — General Carnac, Colonel Smith, and Sir R. Barker are Colonels of the first, second, and third regiments of Infantry ; Sir R. Fletcher, Major Peach, and Major Chapman, Lieutenant-Colonels ; Majors Champion and Stibbart, Majors. It was also proposed to fill up the other vacancy, which I objected to, until General Carnac's sentiments were known ; a compliment I thought due to the commanding officer. You will therefore point out to me whom you would have the third Major, and he shall be appointed. I am informed you do not think Major Champion has had justice done him, when these appointments were made. Major Champion's merits were not known, or he would most certainly have stood next in rank to Colonel. However, Major Champion is satisfied with an assurance from me, that whatever the Directors shall order on that head shall be complied with.

“ After this matter was settled, I desired the Board would order those paragraphs relative to

the power of the committee to be transmitted to the chiefs and council of the subordinate settlements, to the Commander-in-chief of the army, and to the two presidencies of Madras and Bombay, that they might know what powers the committee were invested with. I then acquainted the Board, that the committee was determined to make use of the power invested in them, to its utmost extent ; that the condition of the country, and the very being of the Company made such a step absolutely necessary. Mr. Leycester then seemed inclined to enter into a debate about the meaning and extent of those powers, but I cut him short, by informing the Board, that I would not suffer any one to enter into the least discussion about the meaning of those powers ; but that the committee alone were absolutely determined to be the sole and only judges ; but that they were at liberty to enter upon the face of the consultations any minutes they thought proper, but nothing more. Mr. Johnstone desired that some other paragraphs of the letter might be sent to the different subordinates, &c., as tending, I believe, in his opinion, to invalidate those orders. Upon which I asked him, whether he would dare to dispute our authority? Mr. Johnstone replied, that he never had the least intention of doing such a thing ; upon which there was an appearance of

very long and pale countenances, and not one of the council uttered another syllable. After despatching the current business, the Board broke up, and to-morrow we sit in committee, when, I make no doubt, of discovering such a scene as will be shocking to human nature. They have all received immense sums for this new appointment, and are so shameless, as to own it publicly. Hence we can account for the motive of paying so little respect to me and the committee; and, in short, every thing of benefit to themselves they have in this hasty manner concluded, leaving to the committee the getting the covenants signed, which they say, is of such consequence, that they cannot think of settling any thing final about them until Lord Clive's arrival.

“Alas! how is the English name sunk! I could not avoid paying the tribute of a few tears to the departed and lost fame of the British nation (irrecoverably so, I fear). However, I do declare, by that Great Being who is the searcher of all hearts, and to whom we must be accountable, if there must be an hereafter, that I am come out with a mind superior to all corruption, and that I am determined to destroy those great and growing evils, or perish in the attempt.

“I hope, when matters are a little settled, to set out for the army; bringing with me full

power for you and me to settle every thing for the best.”

His own situation and that of the country, at the period of his arrival, is forcibly depicted in a letter to Mr. Palk, Governor of Madras.*

“ I wrote you a few lines last Saturday ; since which matters do not go on so well as I could wish. Nasib Cawn, either through treachery or want of ammunition, has surrendered himself and army to the enemy ; and Sir R. Fletcher, who was going to his assistance with one hundred Europeans, four battalions of sepoy, and four field pieces, will find some difficulty to get back, as I understand the Rohillas, Mahrattas, and Sujah Dowla, intend to use their utmost efforts to prevent it. He has gained the banks of the Ganges, but I fear has no boats : however, as the General is marching to join him, I hope the enemy will not be able to make any impression before their junction, when I think there is not much to apprehend. Whether Sujah Dowla intends to try his fortune in another battle, or to harass and cut off our supplies, and detach into the Bahar province, we know not. However, we are providing against all accidents, by forming a second army from the reinforcements lately arrived, who are already upon their march for Patna, to cover that country or proceed further,

* 11th May, 1765.

as the situation of affairs may require. Thus circumstanced, you will see the necessity of reinforcing us upon all occasions when you can do it consistent with the safety of your own settlement.

“ Mr. * * * * and all the council have been guilty of such barefaced corruption, that the committee have thought it absolutely necessary to make use of the power given them, in its utmost extent. You are addressed by this conveyance, and copy of the powers with which we are invested has been sent to you.

“ At the first meeting, the gentlemen began to oppose and treat me in the manner they did Vansittart, by disputing our power, and the meaning of the paragraph in the Company’s general letter. However, I cut that matter short, by telling them they should not be the judges of that power, nor would we allow them to enter into the least discussion about it; but that they might enter their dissents in writing, upon the face of the consultations. This brought matters to a conclusion, and spared us the necessity of making use of force, to put the Company’s intentions into execution. We arrived on Tuesday, and effected this on Thursday. On Friday we held a committee; and on Monday was read before the council the following resolution from the committee book: — ‘ Resolved,

that it is the opinion of this committee, that the covenants be executed immediately by the rest of the council, and all the Company's servants.' After many idle and evasive arguments, and being given to understand they must either sign or be suspended the service, they executed the covenants upon the spot. From this you will see what I had the honour to inform you of, that I am determined upon an absolute reformation; but here we must act with caution, until a peace is established, which I do not despair of accomplishing during the rains.

"It gives me infinite concern to inform you that Mr. Spencer (of whom I had the highest opinion) is by no means the man of integrity or abilities that I took him to be; being deeper in the mire than the rest, and who appears to me to have been seduced and led astray by Johnstone and Leycester, having never had any will or opinion of his own, since he came to the chair. Indeed, the dignity of governor is sunk even beyond contempt itself; and the name of council only heard of in these parts. Would you believe that in his letters to the Nabob and others he has submitted to write, 'I and the council?'

"We are waiting the arrival of the Nabob and his ministry, to determine whether we shall suspend them the service, or represent matters in

a general light leaving to the Directors to determine their state; though I am persuaded they will never wait such a decision, having all of them received large fortunes which they barefacedly confess, for absolutely and precipitately concluding the late treaty with the young Nabob; not waiting for our approbation, or leaving it in our power to rectify the least tittle, without being guilty of a breach of faith.

“ The large sums of money already received, and obligations given for the rest, on account of this treaty, are so very notorious through the whole town, and they themselves have taken such little pains to conceal them, that we cannot without forfeiting our honour and reputation possibly avoid a retrospection, as far back as the receipt of the covenants and Meer Jaffier's death. If we should call upon you hereafter for the assistance of Messrs. Broke, Russell, Kelsall, Floyer, and two or three more, we are persuaded your zeal for the service will not let you hesitate a moment about sending them by the first conveyance. However, you will keep the contents of this paragraph to yourself, till you hear from the committee or me upon the subject.

“ I have employed Mr. Vansittart * as Persian interpreter, but cannot admit him to that share

* Mr. George Vansittart, the brother of Henry, the late governor.

of confidence I wish to do, until those matters are ended entirely, out of a point of delicacy towards him."

Clive addressed a letter to Mr. Spencer at this period *, which is singularly illustrative of that bold and open manner which led him to speak and write his sentiments with little if any of that reserve and discretion which are necessary to less vigorous minds to insure their unobstructed progress through life. Mr. Spencer was at this time still in Calcutta.

"I have read over all the consultations from the death of the late Nabob, Jaffier Ali Cawn, to the 4th April, 1765, in which it does not appear to me that you and the gentlemen have given any solid reasons for thus precipitately concluding a solemn treaty with the present young Nabob. There could have been no danger in declining an absolute conclusion of the treaty, until our arrival, which you know was expected every day. I am most sensibly affected at the treatment I have received from you and the gentlemen touching my jaghire. The instructing your deputies to apply to the Nabob for a sunnud to confirm the agreement made by the Company and me was officious, and contrary to the instructions of the Court of Directors, who more than once, in their last letter of the 1st of

* 13th May, 1765.

June, say, this matter is to be conducted by Lord Clive in conjunction with the council. Such a proceeding carries with it a reflection upon my integrity, as if it was doubted whether I should make use of the power I was invested with to perform what I had so solemnly engaged to perform. However, before I leave India, I will endeavour to convince this part of the world upon what principles I act."

Clive was at this period most anxious to make peace with the native states; and among other reasons that led him to seek this object, one of the principal was, to establish subordination* in the army, and to correct abuses in the civil administration, neither of which it was easy to effect while war existed. One of his first steps had been to establish the supremacy of the committee, which consisted only of five members, over the council which had sixteen, including the chiefs of all the principal factories. The members of council could not be expected to suffer patiently the execution of measures, which not only reduced their influence and power, but threatened investigation into their past conduct, and destroyed their golden prospects for the future. A party was soon formed against Clive, the head of which was Mr. Leycester.† But

* Vide letter to Mr. Sykes, 7th July.

† Vide letter to Mr. Palk, 14th July.

one of the most able and energetic of Clive's opponents was Mr. John Johnstone, who had distinguished himself for his zeal and activity when employed with Colonel Forde at the capture of Masulipatam, and in various other services. Mr. Johnstone was, as has been stated, one of the members of the committee who had been the instruments of placing the young Nabob on the throne, and who had received presents which they were not disposed to return. On the contrary, they pleaded the example which others, and especially Clive himself, had given, and refused to admit that there was any just ground for considering conduct as criminal in them which had been approved in their predecessors, placed under circumstances which, according to their statement, were not essentially dissimilar.

Clive*, disregarding opposition, recorded his opinion that the treaty with the Nabob was formed with precipitation; and while he expressed in the most open and bold manner his opinion as to the motives which had influenced those by whom it had been concluded, he declared his determination to exercise his full powers to correct mal-administration, to enforce the signature, by the civil servants, of the covenant, as ordered by the Directors, which had

* Vide letter to Mr. Spencer of the 13th May.

hitherto been evaded* ; and above all, to put a stop to the shameful abuses and wrongs which had arisen from Europeans in the civil service, and free merchants engaging in the inland trade.

* The Court of Directors, by the Lapwing packet, which left England in June, 1764, sent positive orders, which reached Calcutta on the 24th January, 1765, that all persons in the Company's service should execute covenants, restraining them from accepting, directly or indirectly, from the Indian princes, any grant of lands, rents, or territorial dominion, or any present whatever, exceeding the value of four thousand rupees, without the consent of the Court of Directors. The letter further contained orders relating to private trade, and to batta to the troops. The council assembled next day, 25th January. It is remarkable that the subjects, both of the batta and of the private trade, are noticed in the consultation, but no allusion whatever is made to the matter of the covenants. At this crisis the old Nabob died; and Mr. Johnstone and Mr. Leycester were immediately empowered to negotiate with his son, the young Nabob, and accordingly did conclude a treaty, 6th February, as has been already mentioned. About twenty lacs of rupees were, on this occasion, promised, and the greater part of it received, as a present to the Governor and several members of council. (Verelst's Narrative, p. 51. ; Third Report of Select Committee of House of Commons, p. 21.) As upwards of three months had elapsed at the time of Clive's arrival, and the Company's orders regarding the covenants had not yet been put in force, the Select Committee, immediately on meeting, issued an order for carrying them into instant effect. Clive, in his letters, expresses great indignation at the circumstances attending the treaty with the young prince ; and it is impossible not to agree with him in thinking, that the delay in the signing of the covenants, and the subsequent presents from the young Nabob, reflect light on each other.

He was quite aware of all the odium and hostility which the sudden and great reform he contemplated would bring upon him, both in India and England ; but, from the whole tenor of his private letters of this date it is obvious, that the knowledge of this, so far from dispiriting, only encouraged him to the great efforts he made. The following is an extract of a letter to Mr. Sykes of the 29th June on the subject : —

“ I fear the military as well as civil are so far gone in luxury and debauchery, that it will require the utmost exertion of an united committee to save the Company from destruction. However, let us always appeal to the rectitude of our intentions, and we shall be enabled to complete the arduous undertaking with great satisfaction and honour to ourselves. Remember me to Verelst in the kindest manner ; tell him the Company and myself have no other dependence, but upon the justness of his and your principles.”

Lord Clive's anxiety to conclude a peace, made him determine, immediately after his arrival, to proceed to Patna. He had also several arrangements to effect at Moorshedabad*, where affairs had fallen into great confusion. His intention was to proceed, after settling affairs in Bengal, to Bahar ; and his colleagues in the com-

* Vide letter to Mr. Sumner of the 26th June.

mittee delegated to him their power to conclude a settlement with Sujah Dowla and the Emperor of Delhi, with or without the aid of Brigadier General Carnac.* Lord Clive had, however, left Calcutta but a short time, before he was embarrassed by the wavering conduct of Mr. Sumner, the senior member of the committee. His Lordship had proposed, for strong and obvious reasons, that the members of council should be reduced from sixteen to twelve, and that the chiefs of subordinate factories should not be included. Their being in council, he argued, gave them an increased local influence and power, that was often abused; and the council were slow and reluctant to censure or punish the acts, however much they disapproved of them, of members of their own body. Another evil arose out of this system. Rise to council was in fact by seniority; for when nothing appeared on record against an individual, his claim to that station was almost invariably admitted. Mr. Sumner was adverse to any change of this system. Clive, though annoyed at his conduct, which he thought too compromising, endeavoured by every argument he could use, to reclaim him to that decided course which he conceived it the duty of the committee to pursue, and from which it was important they should not be diverted,

* Vide letter, Secret Committee, 21st June, 1765.

either by the opinions or remonstrances of the council : Mr. Sykes continued firmly to support the Governor, but he was called away to his duties at the court of the Nabob at Moorshedabad ; and Mr. Verelst had been before nominated to the station of supervisor of Burdwan and Midnapore.

Placed under these circumstances, Lord Clive made every effort to convince Mr. Sumner of the necessity of giving him a decided support against the opposition raised by the council.

“ I hope,” he observes on one occasion, “ my last letter will have convinced you of the insignificancy of the struggles of the gentlemen of council, as well as of their power, when compared with that of the committee. If you will but convince yourself that they have laid themselves under such a censure that nothing can excuse them at home, and that the committee’s upright and spirited conduct must gain the universal applause, you will treat them with that contempt which they deserve, by never suffering them to give a vote on any subject whatever, when once it has fallen under consideration of the committee.

“ But to convince you what opinion even Mr. Sullivan and our enemies must have of our conduct, I refer you to the two enclosed letters of Mr. Palk, who is Mr. Sullivan’s oracle. Besides,

I have seen a letter of his to Mr. George Vansittart, wherein he speaks in the highest terms of what we are about, and the absolute necessity of a reformation.

“The behaviour of the council is so shameless, abandoned, and ungrateful, that I know not whether I shall not produce fresh accusations against them, in that the subordinate chiefs, down to the writers, have laid all the zemindars under contribution, of which I shall soon be in possession of the most authentic proofs.”

In almost all Clive's letters written at this period he dwells upon the same subjects, expresses his opinion that the covenants should be executed, and depicts the extent and enormity of the prevailing abuses and corruption in the interior of the country, particularly by the natives, whom men with local influence and power have employed as agents. These have (as he states), by their exactions and tyranny, rendered the English name odious.

The sentiments he entertained of his council are fully given in a letter to Mr. Sykes, under date the 10th August.

“The behaviour of the council has convinced me they are children and fools, as well as knaves, and I am not at all concerned, on the Company's account, that they have demeaned themselves in the manner you represent; for we

may now, with great propriety, let the sentiments of humanity give way to justice. For my own part, I am determined, as one, to show them no more mercy; indeed it now becomes necessary, as well for our own vindication as for the advantage of the Company, to make an example of them, and represent them in their proper colours to the Court of Directors.

“ I wish you would get ready the Dinagépoor Rajah’s evidence, as well as the evidence of others, concerning Mr. Gray’s conduct at Malda, against we assemble at Calcutta; and also what other evidences of other gentlemen whose conduct deserves our censure. I can’t help thinking Leycester has been guilty of other misdemeanours at Dacca, &c. Burdett I am sure has.”

In a letter* from Lord Clive to the Directors, he has the following observations upon this subject: — “ Upon my arrival, I am sorry to say, I found your affairs in a condition so nearly desperate, as would have alarmed any set of men whose sense of honour and duty to their employers had not been estranged by the too eager pursuit of their own immediate advantages. The sudden, and, among many, the unwarrantable acquisition of riches, had introduced luxury in

* This letter is dated the 30th September, 1765. It is published in the Third Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons, A. D. 1772.

every shape, and in its most pernicious excess. These two enormous evils went hand in hand together through the whole presidency, infecting almost every member of each department. Every inferior seemed to have grasped at wealth, that he might be enabled to assume that spirit of profusion which was now the only distinction between him and his superior. Thus all distinction ceased; and every rank became, in a manner, upon an equality. Nor was this the end of the mischief; for a contest of such a nature among our servants necessarily destroyed all proportion between their wants and the honest means of satisfying them. In a country where money is plenty, where fear is the principle of government, and where your arms are ever victorious, it is no wonder that the lust of riches should readily embrace the proffered means of its gratification, or that the instruments of your power should avail themselves of their authority, and proceed even to extortion, in those cases where simple corruption could not keep pace with their rapacity. Examples of this sort, set by superiors, could not fail of being followed, in a proportionable degree, by inferiors. The evil was contagious, and spread among the civil and military, down to the writer, the ensign, and the free merchant."

In the answer from the Court of Directors

to this letter * from Clive, they observe ; “ We have the strongest sense of the deplorable state to which our affairs were on the point of being reduced, from the corruption and rapacity of our servants, and the universal depravity of manners throughout the settlements. The general relaxation of all discipline and obedience, both military and civil, was hastily tending to a dissolution of all government. Our letter to the Select Committee expresses our sentiments of what has been obtained by way of donation ; and to that we must add, that we think the vast fortunes acquired in the inland trade have been obtained by a scene of the most tyrannic and oppressive conduct that ever was known in any age or country.”

In the letter of the same date as that of Lord Clive†, from the Select Committee of Calcutta above referred to, they express themselves bound to lay open to the view of the Directors a series of transactions too notoriously known to be suppressed, and too deeply affecting their interest, the national character, and the existence of the Company in Bengal, to escape unnoticed and uncensured. “ Transactions,” they add, “ which seem to demonstrate that every spring of this government was smeared with corruption, that principles of rapacity and

* 17th May, 1766.

† 30th September, 1765.

oppression universally prevailed, and that every spark of sentiment and public spirit was lost and extinguished in the unbounded lust of unmerited wealth."

Lord Clive, in a letter to Mr. Sykes of the 20th August, informs him of the happy conclusion of his mission to Benares, and of his having obtained from the King the grant of the dewanee, or deed, for the administration of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa; an arrangement to which he very justly attaches the greatest value, and which may be viewed as having crowned his efforts as a hero and a statesman, in fixing firm the foundation of the British empire in India.* It is difficult, at the present day, to appreciate that wisdom which appeared to attach a value to the form, almost beyond the substance, of power. It is impossible to satisfy those who judge such questions by philosophic rules, or others who apply a European standard to Indian policy, of the weight of the reasons which led Clive to give the consequence he did to an act, that may appear to them as being more likely to augment, than to lessen, the numerous obstacles which

* It may be mentioned, as a curious fact, that when the durbar for conferring the dewanee on the Company was held, the Emperor having none of the appurtenances of high condition or state along with him, an English dining table, covered over, made the throne on which he sat during the ceremony.

already opposed the good government of our Eastern territories. It is not easy to convince such persons of the degree in which he was enabled, by this grant, to reconcile to the rule of strangers the various communities which formed the vast population of India ; nor can we compute the amount of strength which it took away from princes, who had long been enemies to those Europeans whom they deemed invaders and usurpers, but who were, from the moment the grant was made, in the eyes of a great proportion of their subjects, if not in their own, sanctioned in the exercise of the power they had attained, by the authority of one who, however fallen, was still considered the legitimate source of all rank and authority over that empire of which he was hardly more than the nominal head.

Philosophers may smile at such impressions, may despise those who act on such grounds ; but as the bulk of human beings, in every country, are swayed by impressions and prejudices more than by reason, wise and great statesmen will continue to establish authority, and preserve peace, by adapting their measures to the habits and feeling of the community, instead of acting on theories which, taken in the abstract, have an appearance of wisdom, but reduced to practice, by running counter to the

character and condition of the great mass of men, for whose benefit they are intended, produce bitter fruits from fair but deceitful blossoms.

Previous to the conclusion of the negotiations at Patna, Mr. Verelst*, acting under the instructions of Lord Clive, had succeeded in obtaining the acquiescence of the Nabob of Moorshedabad and his ministers, to an engagement, by which it is stipulated, that 50 lacs of rupees should be assigned for his support†, and that of his family, while the remaining revenue was allotted to the payment of restitutions, expenses of the army, and allowance to the King.

Lord Clive, in a letter which announced to the Court of Directors his having made peace, and obtained rights and privileges that gave them resources which, well managed, were more than competent to maintain the East India Company in that political power which a rapid succession of events had forced upon them, entered fully upon the subject of the future administration of their affairs; and, above all, the necessity of a complete reform in their civil and military establishments, which, in Bengal, he describes to be in the worst possible state, owing to many causes, but to none more than the rise of youth to

* Vide letter from Mr. Verelst, 27th July, 1765.

† An addition of 386,131 was subsequently granted.

wealth and high station, before they had either prudence or judgment; a rise inevitably succeeded by their falling into a state of indolence and luxury, that led to the increase of the evils it was his anxious object, and that of the Select Committee, to remedy.

The measures he adopted to enforce obedience to the orders of the Directors, regarding certain classes of their servants discontinuing trade, were accompanied by a distribution among the seniors, of a proportion of the profits of the salt monopoly, in shares accordant with their rank. These shares, though large, were considered as nothing by men who were enjoying the enormous profits that resulted from the privileges which their influence and authority gave them as merchants. This arrangement, consequently, caused great discontent among those whose interests it affected; which was increased by his removal of civil servants from many minor stations in the provinces, and ordering all free merchants, except those that were specifically licensed, to return to the presidency. An effectual check was also put, at this period, to that system of violence with which the native gomastahs, or agents of civil servants and free merchants, continued to enforce the passing their goods, not only without paying duties, but without

dustucks or passes *, which were granted when it was deemed expedient or proper, on application. There is, in Clive's letter books, much correspondence upon this subject; the whole tenor of which proves, that the effort made by the committee to stop the inland trade, was one of the principal causes of that combination of civil servants, which rapidly increased in number and violence, when it was known, that Clive had requested that four of the senior and best qualified civil servants of Madras should be immediately sent to Bengal, in order to strengthen his administration of the latter presidency.

The conduct of Mr. Leycester, one of the council, who placed himself at the head of the discontented, forced the Select Committee to suspend him. Mr. Gray and Mr. Burdett, two other leaders, went home; and severe measures were taken with several juniors, who joined with their superiors in order to arrest reforms, which threatened to destroy those prospects of early and great wealth in which they so fondly indulged.

Clive heard, soon after his arrival, of Mr. Dudley being deputy-chairman; and we find a

* Mr. Johnstone, who had resigned council, but who remained some time settling the commercial concerns with Mr. Bolts, complains of his salt being stopped; Lord Clive, in reply, says he should have applied for a dustuck.

long private letter*, written in 1765, to that gentleman. In this, after commenting with his usual freedom on the characters of persons connected with the conduct of Indian affairs, both at home and abroad, he particularly alludes to Mr. Sumner, his destined successor, who, however respectable, he was led to believe, from what he has seen and heard, would not be found to possess that energy and decision which were indispensable to carry into full effect the system which he had introduced.

He concludes this letter with some strong opinions, as to the measures that were necessary to insure the future welfare of Bengal: —

“ If the Directors will empower me alone, or me in conjunction with the present committee, to regulate matters, I can be responsible for the consequences after my departure; if not, I much fear, things will fall into the old channel, and to the advantages arising from salt will be added every other that can be obtained.

“ Remember the oath and penalty bond mentioned in my public letter.

“ If you could, by increasing the Governor’s salary, or ordering his proportion of salt to be greater, insert in the oath, that the Governor should not be allowed the liberty of private

* Letter to Mr. Dudley, 29th September, 1765.

trade, but attend only to the affairs of the Company, leaving trade to the second, &c., I think the plan of government would be much more perfect, as it would be less liable to abuses from the head.

“With regard to the magnitude of our possessions, be not staggered. Assure yourself that the Company must either be what they are, or be annihilated. Hitherto, at least, one can see no alternative; for, in a moderate state, though the power might still be preserved, corruption and frequent revolutions, must in the end over-set us. Never was there a time when affairs wore so strong an appearance of prosperity and stability as the present.

“Irruptions of the Mahrattas may now and then interrupt our trade, and impede the collection of our revenues; but I am persuaded that nothing can prove fatal but a renewal of licentiousness among your servants here, or intestine divisions among yourselves at home.

“I am sorry I cannot send the Directors, by this conveyance, a list of the revenues; but I am as much convinced as that I now exist, that when the revenues are all perfectly regulated, the Company will receive, clear of civil and military expenses, and without oppressing or overloading the inhabitants, a net income of 2,000,000*l.* sterling per annum.

“One arduous undertaking still remains behind; I mean, a thorough examination into all the civil and military offices. The difficulty is in the choice of men for a committee. We cannot easily find servants here endued with such strict principles of honour as to make them think it a duty they owe the Company to enter heartily into the scrutiny, and recommend such wholesome regulations as may in future prevent abuses.

“It is impossible for the Select Committee to go through the whole themselves, nor can they expect to see a thorough reformation take place, unless they are assisted with the zeal and assiduity of others. If the gentlemen of Madras whom I have recommended were here, I could be certain of having my plan soon completed. The Directors will, I am sure, be surprised when they see what a total inattention (to call it by no worse a name) there has been in the gentlemen of council, with regard to their employment, and what gross frauds have been committed by the natives acting under them.

“Still more will they be surprised, when they see the late military expenses, compared with the present; for there is now a system of economy, consistent with the true interest of the Company, and yet the allowances are not reduced below what they ought to be.

Neither the general nor committee's letter is very full upon the subject of remittances. This year we shall probably draw upon you to the amount of treasure sent to China. There still remains 24 lacs of restitution money to be paid, 3 lacs of donation, 30 lacs of bonds and 10 or 12 lacs to be sent to Bombay; and if to this you add 20 lacs to be sent to China, the whole will amount to 87 or 89 lacs. Our treasury at present is low, as we have not yet received the benefit of our new grant; and large sums have been advanced for the investment, which will exceed 40 lacs this year.

“The trade of salt, betle, and tobacco is now become an object of the utmost importance, both to the Company and to individuals. If the profits should greatly exceed what they are stated at, as some are sanguine enough to imagine, you may be assured the Company shall receive the benefit; for, if the clear gain should exceed a certain sum, the indulgence will become too great. As matters are settled at present, the Company will receive one half of the advantages by allowing them a duty of 35 per cent. upon salt, which is the principal article. The proprietors pay 10 per cent. for the loan of money, and 5 per cent. may be allowed for the loss of boats and wastage.”

The Court of Directors appear, from their

general letters sent by Lord Clive, and those, of subsequent date, to have been very anxious to put an end to the internal trade carried on by their servants and their native agents, which they considered as being alike oppressive to the inhabitants of the country, and injurious to the native governments. It constituted a great source of profit to individuals, but was, they stated, directly opposed to the interests of the Company, and from the mode in which it was carried on brought disgrace upon the English name. In the general letter of April 26th, 1765, the Court observes, with reference to the conduct of the civil servants who had charge of the government before the arrival of Lord Clive, and who pretended that their right to engage in the internal trade, and to have their goods passed free of duty, was founded on the Emperor's firman to the Company ; —

“ Treaties of commerce are understood to be for the mutual benefit of the contracting parties. Is it then possible to suppose that the court of Delhi, by conferring the privilege of trading free of customs, could mean an inland trade in the commodities of their own country, at that period unpractised and unthought of by the English, to the detriment of their revenues and the ruin of their own merchants? We do not find such a construction was ever heard of, until our own

servants first invented it, and afterwards supported it by violence. Neither could it be claimed by the subsequent treaties with Meer Jaffier, or Cossim Ali, which were never understood to give one additional privilege of trade beyond what the firman expressed. In short, the specious arguments used by those who pretended to set up a right to it convince us they did not want judgment, but virtue to withstand the temptation of suddenly amassing a great fortune, although acquired by means incompatible with the peace of the country, and their duty to the Company.

“ Equally blamable were they who, acknowledging they had no right to it, and sensible of the ill consequences resulting from assuming it, have, nevertheless, carried on this trade, and used the authority of the Company to obtain, by a treaty exacted by violence, a sanction for a trade to enrich themselves, without the least regard or advantage to the Company, whose forces they employed to protect them in it.

“ Had this short question been put, which their duty ought first to have suggested, ‘ Is it for the interest of our employers?’ they would not have hesitated one moment about it; but this criterion seems never once to have occurred.

“ All barriers being thus broken down between the English and the country government,

and every thing out of its proper channel, we are at a loss how to prescribe means to restore order from this confusion; and being deprived of that confidence which we hoped we might have placed in our servants, who appear to have been the actors in these strange scenes, we can only say, that we rely on the zeal and abilities of Lord Clive, and the gentlemen of the Select Committee, to remedy these evils. We hope they will restore our reputation among the country powers, and convince them of our abhorrence of oppression and rapaciousness."

In the general letter, under date the 19th February, 1766, recurring to the same subject, they write: —

"With respect to the treaty with Nudjum-ul-Dowla, it is proper here to insert, at length, the fifth article, which runs in these words: — 'I do ratify and confirm to the English the privilege granted them by their firman, and several husbulhookums, of carrying on their trade, by means of their own dustucks, free from all duties, taxes, or impositions, in all parts of the country, except in the article of salt, on which the duty of two and a half per cent. is to be levied on the Rowana or Haughley market price.' This fifth article is totally repugnant to our own order, contained in our general letter, by the Kent and Lapwing, dated the 1st June, 1764;

in which we not only expressed our abhorrence of an article in the treaty with Meer Jaffier, literally corresponding with the present fifth article, but in positive terms directed you, in concert with the Nabob, to form an equitable plan for carrying on the inland trade, and transmit the same to us, accompanied by such explanations and remarks as might enable us to give our sentiments and directions thereupon. We must remind you, too, that in our said general letter we expressly directed, that our orders, in our letter of the 8th February preceding, which were to put a final and effectual end to the inland trade in salt, betle-nut, and tobacco, and in all other articles produced and consumed in the country, should remain in force, until an equitable and satisfactory plan could be found and adopted. As, therefore, there is not the least latitude given you for concluding any treaty whatsoever respecting this inland trade, we must and do consider what you have done as an express breach and violation of our orders, and as a detrimental resolution to sacrifice the interest of the Company, and the peace of the country, to lucrative and selfish views.

“ This unaccountable behaviour put an end to all confidence in those who made this treaty, and forces us to resolve on measures for the support of our authority, and the preservation of

the Company. We do therefore pronounce, that every servant concerned in that trade stands guilty of a breach of his covenants with us and of our orders ; and in consequence of this resolution, we positively direct, that if that treaty is now subsisting, you make a formal renunciation, by some solemn act to be entered on your records, of all right under the said treaty, or otherwise, to trade in salt, betle-nut, and tobacco ; and that you transmit this renunciation of that part of the treaty, in form, to the Nabob, in the Persian language. Whatever government may be established, or whatever unforeseen occurrences may arise, it is our resolution to prohibit, and we do absolutely forbid, this trade of salt, betle-nut, and tobacco, and of all articles that are not for export and import, according to the spirit of the firman, which does not in the least give any latitude whatsoever for carrying on such an inland trade ; and, moreover, we shall deem every European concerned therein, directly or indirectly, guilty of a breach of his covenants, and direct that he be forthwith sent to England, that we may proceed against him accordingly. And every native who shall avail himself of our protection to carry this trade on, without paying all the duties due to the government equally with the rest of the Nabob's subjects, shall forfeit that protection, and be banished the settlement ;

and we direct that these resolutions be signified publicly throughout the settlement."

These letters were meant to be in support of the measures Lord Clive was supposed to have adopted ; but the opinions of the Court in regard to the salt trade differed essentially from those on which he had acted. This subject, however, will be noticed hereafter. In a subsequent letter, (May 17th, 1766,) after stating the earnest request they had made of Lord Clive to remain one more season in Bengal, and giving their sentiments on the importance of his services, they drew a strong and just contrast between the conduct of the Select Committee, of which he was president, and that of the Governor and Council, whose power it had superseded.

"The article in the treaty with Shuja Dowla, stipulating a trade duty-free, through his dominions, we direct to be confined solely to the Company's trade ; and even in that sense of it, we mean only if his dominions produce any goods fit for the European markets, or if it can be made the means of extending our trade in the woollen manufactory, or any other European goods.

"We come now to consider the great and important affairs of the dewannee, on which we shall give our sentiments with every objection that occurs to us.

“When we consider that the barrier of the country government was entirely broken down, and every Englishman throughout the country armed with an authority that owned no superior, and exercising his power to the oppression of the helpless natives, who knew not whom to obey; at such a crisis, we cannot hesitate to approve your obtaining the dewanee for the Company.

“When we look back to the system that Lord Clive and the gentlemen of the Select Committee found established, it presents to us a subah disarmed, with a revenue of almost two millions sterling, (for so much seems to have been left, exclusive of our demands on him,) at the mercy of our servants, who had adopted an unheard-of ruinous principle, of an interest distinct from the Company. This principle showed itself in laying their hands upon every thing they did not deem the Company’s property.

“In the province of Burdwan, the resident and his council took an annual stipend of near $\text{₹}80,000$ rupees per annum from the Rajah, in addition to the Company’s salary. This stands on the Burdwan accounts, and we fear was not the whole; for we apprehend it went further, and that they carried this pernicious principle even to the sharing with the Rajah of all he collected beyond the stipulated

malguzary, or land revenue, overlooking the point of duty to the Company, to whom, properly, every thing belonged that was not necessary for the Rajah's support. It has been the principle, too, on which our servants have falsely endeavoured to gloss over the crime of their proceedings, on the accession of the present Subah ; and we fear would have been soon extended to the grasping the greatest share of that part of the Nabob's revenues which was not allotted to the Company. In short, this principle was directly undermining the whole fabric ; for whilst the Company were sinking under the burden of the war, our servants were enriching themselves from those very funds that ought to have supported the war. But to Lord Clive and our Select Committee we owe, that the Company are at last considered as principals in the advantages as well as dangers."

Clive had recommended, that the Governor of Bengal should have an adequate salary, and be restrained from trade. In one of his letters already quoted, he strongly urged that he should be vested with authority to take a resolution in cases of emergency entirely on himself. He subsequently not only pointed out the expediency of making Calcutta the chief seat of the government of India, but proposed, in any future arrangement, the nomination of a Governor-general, with the

full powers he now enjoys. All these propositions have been adopted; but the most important were not carried into effect till thirty years of collision and confusion in the administration of the Indian Government, through the means of separate and independent presidencies, compelled the divided and jealous authorities in England to follow the wise counsel of one whose experience and foresight enabled him to predict the evils which must result from the weakness and distraction of their government abroad; and the necessity of forming one uniform system for the administration of our Indian territories, and placing them under one efficient general rule,—the individual at the head of which should be of a character that justified his being clothed with paramount power over the whole.

Such was the magnitude of the evils that now weighed down the government of Bengal. It was at this period of danger from external enemies aggravated by a system radically corrupt, and in the continuance of which the interests of almost the whole of the public servants, and of all the free traders, were involved, that Clive evinced all the energy of his extraordinary character. We trace that quality, however, more in his private than in his public letters; and some extracts from the former will exhibit, better than the most laboured detail, the nature of the ob-

stacles he had to encounter, and the measures he took to surmount them, and to restore and fix, on a firmer foundation than ever, the interests of his country in India. He observes, in a letter to Mr. Palk, Governor of Madras, dated Calcutta, 4th May * ; —

“ I have little more to say than that I arrived here yesterday, and that all affairs, civil and military, are in a state of confusion beyond what I had even reason to expect. I can see no end to the troubles in these parts. Suja Dowla has been joined by the Rohillas and Mahrattas, and he is marching down with them to make another effort to recover his dominions, which, at present, are entirely in our possession. Their apprehension seems to be, that our principal object is to support the King, and establish him at Delhi; and if this is the case, we may expect all India will go to war with us. Such a continued scene of fighting as this seems to open, will not, however, suit with us; and, in a very short time, I believe I must march up to camp, in order to settle measures, if possible, upon a pacific plan. I beg you will send us as many small arms, as well as men, as your settlement can spare, out of the next and succeeding ships.” † * * * *

* 1765.

† At the time of Lord Clive's writing the letter quoted in the text, to Mr. Palk, the Governor of Madras, which was

In a letter to General Carnac, he describes the state of the Nabob of Moorshedabad and

the day after his Lordship's arrival at Bengal, Suja Dowla was, as is mentioned in that letter, threatening to invade our provinces with a large army, joined by the Mahrattas and Rohillas. But he altered his tone very shortly after; since it appears, by a letter written by him to General Carnac, that he offered to make peace on any terms.

This letter, it appears from the public records mentioned in the Report of the Select Committee of 1772, was received by General Carnac on the 19th of May, 1765, and was probably written by Suja Dowla two days before; which allows for his having received intelligence of Lord Clive's arrival on the 3d of that month, and that it had the effect of his proposing to make peace with the English.

The letter is worth transcribing in this place. (3d Rep. of Select Comm. App. No. 84.)

Suja Dowla to General Carnac.

"It is known all over the world, that the illustrious chiefs of the English nation are constant and unchangeable in their friendship, which my heart is fully persuaded of. The late disturbances were contrary to my inclination; but it was so ordered by Providence. I now see things in a proper light, and have a strong desire to come to you; and am persuaded you will treat me in a manner befitting your own honour. You have shown great favours to others; when you become acquainted with me you will see with your own eyes, and be thoroughly sensible of my attachment, from which I will never depart while I have life. I am this day arrived at Belgram: please God, in a very short time I shall have the happiness of a meeting with you. As for other particulars, I refer you to Monyr-o-Dowla and Rajah Shitabroy."

(And with his own hand.)

"My Friend,—I regard not wealth nor the government of countries: your favour and friendship is all I desire.

his ministers, and the recent events at that court, in the following terms * : —

“ I cannot yet write you particulars ; however, matters seem drawing to a conclusion. The Nabob and Mahomed Reza Cawn are arrived. The Seets and Roydulub will be here to-morrow, and I am determined to give an impartial audience to all of them, who are ready enough to disclose every transaction, and will prove to demonstration, upon what grounds and principles the gentlemen have been actuated, thus precipitately to conclude a treaty before our arrival.

“ Although Nundcomar may not prove guilty of the crimes laid to his charge, yet, believe me, my dear General, he will do no honour, either to the Nabob or to the Company, in any great or eminent post, which he never was formed or designed for ; and I can give you unanswerable

Please God, I will be with you very soon, when you will do for me what you think best.”

The fame of Lord Clive having been so long established in India, it will not be thought extraordinary by those acquainted with that country, that the news of his return to it should have operated, as it did, so instantaneously with Suja Dowla, in the manner expressed in the above letter.

Lord Clive soon after concluded a treaty of peace with him, of which an account is given in the letter of the Select Committee at Calcutta, 30th September, 1765, in the same Report, App., No. 86.

* Calcutta, 20th May, 1765.

reasons against his being the principal person about the Nabob, when I have the pleasure of seeing you. I am as fully averse to Reza Ali Cawn's remaining in the great post of Naib Subah. His being a Mussulman, acute, and clever, are reasons of themselves, if there were no others, against trusting that man with too much power; and yet the young man must have men about him capable of directing and governing him; for besides his youth, he is really very simple, and always receives his impressions from those who are last about him. It is really shocking to see what a set of miserable and mean wretches Nund-comar has placed about him, men that the other day were horsekeepers. I proposed that three or four of the principal families in Bengal shall assist him in his government; and make no doubt of obtaining his own consent for adopting such a plan as may make him perfectly easy in his own mind, and do the English nation honour.

“ I hope fifteen or twenty days will enable me to put affairs in such a channel, that the gentlemen may go on with the reformation during my absence; and upon my arrival we must heartily set about a peace: for the expense is now become so enormous, (no less than 10 lacs per mensem, civil and military,) that the Company must be inevitably undone, if the Mahrattas, or

any other powers, should invade Bahar and Bengal ; for it will then be impossible to raise money sufficient to continue the war. This is a very serious consideration with me, and will, I make no doubt, strike you in the same light."

Treating the same subject in a subsequent letter, Clive observes * : —

" Strange discoveries have been made, which prove your conjectures about revolutions to be true. The enclosed will give you an idea of what is intended. The more I see of the Nabob, the more I am convinced of his incapacity for business : whether it proceeds from want of natural abilities, or want of education, time will discover ; certain it is, the most difficult task we have is to act in such a manner as not to put too great a restraint upon the Nabob's inclinations, and yet, at the same time, influence him to do what is for his own honour, and the good of the Company. There is no submitting to be dictated to by every plaguy fellow about him."

And again† : —

" There seems to me to have been a combination between the blacks and whites, to divide all the revenues of the Company between them, for the Nabob knows nothing about the matter. Large sums have been taken out of

* General Carnac, 27th May, 1765.

† Ibid., 30th May, 1765.

both treasuries, by Mahommed Reza Cawn at Muxadabad, and by Nundcomar at Calcutta. Every day convinces me, that so long as that man with his instruments continue about him we shall never have that influence which appears to me absolutely necessary, as well for his own reputation as to prevent the revenues being dissipated on a set of plaguy rascals."

The evidence which Clive about this time obtained from the officers of the Nabob, of the sums paid to the different public servants on the conclusion of the treaty, are stated in a letter to General Carnac*, with some severe remarks on the conduct of those who, on that occasion, sacrificed the interest and honour of the public for venal objects. This subject would, in its details, lead us too far. Suffice it to say, that the strong measures which the discovery he made led him to adopt, particularly that of suspending several of the older civil officers from the service, added to the number of his enemies in a degree that made them more powerful in England than in India, and was the chief cause of that parliamentary inquiry into his conduct which took place on his return to his native country. Meanwhile, however, the honest course of investigation which he pursued, though fatiguing and painful to his mind, and severe on his spirits,

* 8th June, 1765.

left him resolute and composed in his sense of duty. He had a great object in view, the salvation of an empire, through the repression of wrong, and the amendment of the public character and morals. "Let me but have health sufficient to go through with the reformation we intend," says he, in writing to his friend Carnac, "and I shall die with satisfaction and in peace." The same feeling, which seems at this period to have deeply penetrated his mind, he expresses to many of his friends.

Clive, it appears from several letters to other friends, had been, at this period, seriously hurt at the long, and, as he thought, the mysterious silence of General Carnac. He was at last relieved by a letter, which satisfactorily accounted for the apparent neglect of a friend for whom he cherished so sincere an esteem. The following extract from Clive's reply is singularly illustrative of his feelings, and of the principles on which he acted : —

"The receipt of your letter *, number eight, gave me as much pleasure as your long silence gave me real concern. Indeed, I had resolved to write no more, being convinced that, from some cause or other, the friendship which had so long subsisted between us was drawing towards a conclusion, *since you had declined even giving

* Mootagyl, 8th July, 1765.

me your sentiments upon a subject or subjects in which I conjectured we may have differed in opinion. But surely that could be no reason for not writing at all ; neither ought a difference of opinion, where both are actuated by principles of honour and justice, in the least diminish that cordial affection which hitherto hath subsisted, and I trust will subsist to the day of our deaths.

“ I was not ignorant, when a general Court of Proprietors prevailed upon me to resume this government, what an odious as well as arduous task I had undertaken. Foreseeing, in a manner, every thing at the time which has since happened, I was determined, if possible, to answer the expectations of the Proprietors, who did me the honour to think me the only person who could, by my power and influence (and example, I hope,) put a stop to that universal corruption (some few instances excepted) which seems to have spread itself over all Bengal.

“ Although a reformation both in the civil and military department appears to me absolutely necessary, yet if there be any thing which can occasion you the least uneasiness, for God’s sake let the whole weight fall upon my shoulders. I can go through every thing with pleasure, so long as I can, with truth, and without vanity, apply to myself these beautiful lines of Horace : —

‘ *Justum et tenacem propositi virum,* ’ ” &c.

Clive, in the following letter to his friend Walsh, dated 30th September, 1765, gives full scope to his feelings, both as to public transactions, and those connected with them : —

“ Our friendship and connection have been of so many years’ standing, and I have always observed in you so much real warmth of heart and zeal for my interest and honour, that I think of these marks of your affection in this distant part of the globe with the greatest satisfaction.

“ To you, and to you only, I shall communicate every transaction of consequence which has passed since our arrival, because I know you have judgment and discretion to make a proper use of them.

“ It will be needless to expatiate on the very great things we have done for the Company, since the several papers which accompany this will make you a perfect master of the whole of our proceedings.

“ I have referred many of my friends to you for information ; but you will communicate to them what you think proper, Mr. Grenville excepted, to whom I have been very explicit, having inclosed him a copy of my letter to the Court of Directors, translation of the treaty of peace, and a map of Bengal, with some marginal explanations.

“ You will therefore lay before him, without

reserve, all papers of a public nature; such as relate to individuals, and are not made public, you may not think proper to reveal to any one. There is only one paper which I could not send you, viz. the letter from the Select Committee to the Court of Directors, being bound by oath not to make any of our proceedings public until laid before council, or communicated to the Court of Directors; neither of which being yet done, with respect to the committee's letter, is the reason I cannot send you a copy; but you will, undoubtedly, obtain a sight of it from Scrafton.

“ Had I known Mr. Sumner as well as I do at present, I would never have consented to his being appointed my successor, let the consequences be what they would. I did, indeed, entertain hopes, that my example and instructions might furnish that gentleman with a plan of conduct and political knowledge, which would have enabled him to fill the chair with honour, and me to leave it with satisfaction to myself. But I am sorry to inform you, that I had been but a short time on board the Kent, before I discovered him to be a man no ways fit to be my successor. His ideas of government differ widely indeed from mine; add to this, his judgment is weak, timid, and unsound, and resolution he has none.

“ Nor was my opinion of him changed on our arrival here ; for I was frequently mortified with instances of his conduct, which made me look forward with regret to the day on which he was to be intrusted with the government of Bengal.

“ When affairs of the utmost consequence to the Company were transacting by me, at the distance of seven hundred miles from the presidency, Mr. Sumner, governor for the time being, would have yielded up some of the most material privileges of the committee to Mr. Leycester, Gray, and Burdett, the most factious among the counsellors ; and, if I had not written to him very severely on the subject, and prevailed on Mr. Verelst to hasten down from Burdwan to remonstrate to him on the weakness of his conduct, I verily believe he would have joined with those gentlemen in endeavouring to abolish the power of the committee.

“ Whether his behaviour arose merely from timidity of temper, or from a consideration that his actions formerly, in the Burdwan country, could not bear a scrutiny, if the resentment of those whom he had been obliged to join in condemning should prompt them to retaliate, I cannot say ; but it is certain that his attention to those gentlemen, guilty as they had been of the most notorious acts of oppression, was mean and

absurd. His conduct, upon the whole, convinces me, that had he been in council during the late transactions he would have stood next to Mr. Johnstone in the donation list, which I almost wish he had, since the Company and I should, by that means, have been freed from the apprehensions we now labour under, on account of his succeeding me in the government.

“ Imagine not that I have exceeded the bounds of truth in this description. A due regard to my own honour, as well as to the advantage of the Company, obliges me to be thus plain; but it is not my intention to impress you with ideas so far to the disadvantage of Mr. Sumner, as that he may be set aside from the government. I think I cannot go such lengths without hurting my own reputation. I must make a point of his succeeding me according to his appointment; and I hope affairs will go on very well, as long as he has a good committee or council to watch him.

“ If you can prevail upon the Court of Directors to empower me alone, or me in conjunction with the Select Committee, to regulate matters, I will be responsible for his good behaviour: if not, I much fear things will fall into the old channel; and to the advantages arising from salt will be added every other that can be grasped at.

“Remember the oath and penalty bond mentioned in my public letter. If by increasing the Governor’s salary, or ordering his proportion of salt to be greater, there was a particular oath for the Governor, whereby he should not be allowed the liberty of private trade at all, but obliged to attend to the affairs of the Company only, leaving trade to the second, &c., I think the plan of government would be much more perfect, as it would be less liable to abuses from the head.

“I have hinted to Dudley only my sentiments of Mr. Sumner, and he knows from me that I have explained myself to you. Consult, therefore, together about the matter; settle it, if possible, in such a manner that I may not be taxed with breach of promise to Mr. Sumner, and I may at the same time resign the government without apprehension for the consequences.

“It would be endless for me to send you the particulars of every act of extortion and corruption. I had prepared a great many, under the hands and seals of the several zemindars and phousdars, in order to make it impossible for such men to succeed in any of their future designs; but the total overthrow of Sullivan and his party makes such authentic proofs unnecessary, especially as we have sent home sufficient

to convince every impartial Director of the general corruption and profligacy of their servants in Bengal.

“ Among other papers, you will find a letter from the King to the Governor and Council, in favour of General Carnac. The 2 lacs of rupees he has given him is lodged in the public funds, until the pleasure of the Directors is known. I shall only say that Carnac has acted with such moderation and honour in the service of the Company, and with such good deference and attention towards his Majesty the Great Mogul, that the Directors must be the most ungrateful of men, if they do not, by the return of this ship, or the first conveyance, order him this money, with a due encomium upon his services, disinterestedness, and modesty. I am sure your interest will not be wanting to push this matter to the utmost, if it be possible that such an order from the Court should meet with the least resistance.

“ I have determined to remain in this country until I receive an answer to our proceedings. No consideration on earth shall prevail upon me to stay beyond the month of December, 1766 ; and my friends may be assured, if no accident happens to me, of hearing of me from Europe in April or May, 1767. In the mean time I shall

dedicate every day of my life to the service of the Company; a thorough reformation shall take place; every department, both civil and military, shall be examined, and regulated by a disinterested committee, upon oath; and the Directors will be surprised indeed at the extravagancy, inattention, and frauds of their servants, both civil and military, at the same time that they must be greatly pleased at the reduction of their exorbitant expenses.

“Can you believe me, that the civil and military charges at the time of my arrival, amounted to between 11 and 12 lacs per month?”

“I have dropt all thoughts of what I mentioned to you from Rio Janeiro, concerning my jaghire, and am resolved to let it rest as it is.

“That you may assist with confidence the justice of my cause, I do declare, by that God who made me, it is my absolute determination to refuse every present of consequence, and that I will not return to England with one rupee more than what arises from my jaghire. My profits arising from salt shall be divided among those friends who have endangered their lives and constitutions in attending me; the congratulatory nuzzurs shall be set opposite to my extraordinary expenses, and, if aught remains, it shall go to Poplar or some other hospital.”

Clive, the same day, wrote the following

letter* to Mr. Grenville, with whom, throughout this period, he appears to have kept up a constant correspondence : —

“ Give me leave to call to your remembrance some discourse we had together about the Company’s affairs (in which the honour and interest of our nation was so much concerned), and to inform you, I have now the particular satisfaction of seeing the great object of my wishes nearly accomplished.

“ The enclosed copy of my letter to the Court of Directors, and a map of Bengal, with some marginal explanations, will open to you a full view of the present great and flourishing condition of our East India Company, and show how near it was to destruction, from corruption, extortion, and luxury. If you have leisure and inclination to be further acquainted with our transactions, Mr. Walsh has orders from me to lay before you our proceedings. May what we are about, in times of distress and necessity, contribute towards lessening the debt of the nation. If you imagine the King can find amusement in perusing any of these papers, or some particular friends whom you can trust, I shall have no objection.

“ I hope by this year’s conveyance to send you a particular account of the revenues of these

* Dated Calcutta, 30th September, 1765.

provinces, which, put under proper management, cannot fall far short of 4,000,000*l.* per annum.

“ I return you many thanks for Mr. Strachey : I have found him in every respect deserving your good opinion ; and I must not forget to express how thankful I am for the assistance you have given Mr. Nevil Maskelyne, to obtain the Regius professorship.

“ My best wishes attend Mrs. Grenville and all your family.”

Clive observes, in a letter to Lord Halifax, of the same date, —

“ I will not attempt entering into a detail of affairs in this part of the world, especially as I have enabled Mr. Grenville to give your Lordship a very explicit account of the prosperous and flourishing condition of the East India Company : too prosperous, without they have better heads and hearts to manage such grand and extensive concerns than heretofore.”

In the following letter * from Lord Clive to Sir Matthew Featherstonhaugh he states, —

“ We have just concluded a very honourable and advantageous peace with Sujah-u-Dowlah. To convince him, as well as the Mogul empire, of our moderation, we have restored to him all his dominions, upon condition of paying to the

* Dated Calcutta, 30th September, 1765.

Company 50 lacs of rupees, or 600,000*l.* (the half down, and security for the other half.) This he very readily consented to, and has exactly complied with his engagements ; so that Bengal, by such a powerful alliance, will in all probability enjoy tranquillity and peace for some time.

“ Was I to paint to you the anarchy and confusion which reigned in these rich provinces upon my arrival, you would be much surprised. Indeed, the Company’s affairs were at their last gasp, not from our enemies, but from that universal licentiousness which had overrun the whole settlement of Calcutta. Extortion and corruption were practised openly and at noonday. The three kingdoms of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, whose revenues amount to 4,000,000*l.* sterling per annum, had been put up to sale, and the profits divided among the civil and military ; the Company’s interests have been most scandalously sacrificed ; but on this subject let me refer you to Mr. Walsh, who will give you such proofs of the venality, corruption, and extortions of the Company’s servants, as must give you great pain, from the consideration of the national honour being so much prostituted.

“ We are making use of the power given the committee to check these great and growing evils, and have made great progress already. Our vigorous proceedings towards retrieving the na-

tional honour, and obtaining for the Company those great and glorious advantages, which they are so justly entitled to, will, I make no doubt, create us many enemies ; however, conscious rectitude will enable us to go through our undertakings with pleasure. With regard to myself, I do declare, upon the word of a gentleman, and upon my honour, that, although history can scarce furnish an instance of any subject who hath had such opportunities of acquiring an immense fortune, it is my determined resolution to return to my native country not one farthing richer than when I left it.

“ The very great attention you have always paid to my interest, and the favourable opinion you have always entertained of my abilities and zeal for the Company, bind me to you by ties of the strongest gratitude.

“ The Company, in consequence of a grant from the Great Mogul, and with the Nabob’s approbation, are in possession of a clear revenue of 2,000,000*l.* sterling ; and all our expenses, both civil and military, can never exceed the half of that sum in time of war, and in time of peace, not more than 600,000*l.* per annum : so that, at the worst of times, there will be a clear gain of 1,000,000*l.* sterling per annum to the Company. Neither are these revenues chimerical or precarious: the rents are regularly paid ; and we

have established such a force, that all the powers of Hindostan cannot deprive us of our possessions for many years. Let me refer you to Mr. Walsh for further particulars, who, I am persuaded, will explain these matters much to your satisfaction.

“ Although I find I cannot, as formerly, struggle with the inclemency of this hot climate, yet I am determined to wait for an answer to our despatches by this ship : my duty to my family will not permit me to stay longer. I hope to kiss your hand in April or May, 1767.

“ The Duke of Devonshire’s death has given me inexpressible concern : the nation has lost a nobleman who was an honour to it, and we the best and sincerest of friends. I could with pleasure have attached myself to him for the remainder of my days.”

The following letter* to his friend Scrafton exhibits a short view of the prosperous state of the finances, and closes with a postscript written on Clive’s hearing of his friend’s election to the office of Director : —

“ You must not expect a long letter from me, because I know you will have many particulars from other friends, and because the public business will really not allow me time for that purpose.

* Dated Calcutta, 25th September, 1765.

“ Revolution upon revolution, rapacity, extortion, and corruption, have at last reduced us to the necessity of doing the only thing which could be done, to save the whole fabric from being ruined. The King hath granted to the Company the dewannee of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, and expresses himself in this manner:— ‘ In consideration of the great services rendered me by the English Company, and on the condition of their paying me the annual tribute of 26 lacs, and allowing sufficient for the support of the dignity of the Nizamut, whatever remains of the revenues of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, I give to the English Company as a free gift, for ever and ever.’

“ The Nabob’s allowances are 53 lacs, which he signed and agreed to; so that there will remain little short of 200 lacs to the Company, clear of all expenses in collections. What think you of the stocks? We shall draw bills for about 16 lacs this year, and, in future, I believe, there will be an end to bills of exchange. Our investment this year will exceed 40 lacs, and we shall send 15 lacs to China. We have 24 lacs of restitution money to pay, and 30 lacs of bonds to discharge, or we should not have drawn at all, even this year.

“ We have concluded a firm and lasting peace with Sujah-u-Dowlah, by giving him up all his

country, for which he pays 50 lacs to the Company: 25 down, and security for the rest in twelve months. I have not leisure to entertain you with an account of our proceedings with regard to the gentlemen of council: the upshot is, as you have expressed yourself in one of your letters, ‘There are not five men of principle in the whole settlement.’ I believe this is the first instance of such a paper appearing upon record as we have sent home.

“There is an account in our committee and consultation proceedings, as large as a general return, with as many columns, specifying the sums of money received, and to be received, by whom, and to whom, and on whose houses drawn; in short, the Directors, when they first see these papers, will imagine it to be an account of increase of revenues. If you can get John Walsh into a humour of entertaining you upon these matters, he is qualified to do it better than any man in England. My time and paper grow short.

“I am, dear Scrafton,

“Yours, &c.

“CLIVE.

“May it please your Honour,

“I did not know at the time I wrote the above, that your Honour would have been one of

my masters, as I might have saved myself the trouble of writing so much, or referring you to Walsh. Believe me, there is an absolute necessity of getting some of the Madras servants here, or we shall never bring about a reformation. The gentry here will do nothing with a good will.

“ I am

“ Your Honour’s most obedient servant,

“ CLIVE.”

Clive, in answering a letter * from Mr. Fowke, a Director, observes,—

“ I have received your letter of the 13th November, 1764, from the contents of which I can easily perceive our affairs in Leadenhall Street are not likely to be upon a solid foundation for some time: indeed, Rous, though a very honest man, is the most unfit of all men living to preside and govern a Court of Directors. I am now convinced, a man of lighter principles, with more abilities, and a certain degree of resolution, will manage both private and public concerns to more advantage than Mr. Rous. My only hopes are, that the next year’s election will produce one or two men well versed in the politics of India, and then Mr. Sullivan may be entirely excluded.

* * Dated 25th September, 1765.

"I am not at all surprised at your disappointment; nothing less could have been expected from such a divided and distracted Direction; nor should I be much surprised if something of a disagreeable nature, touching my powers, should find its way to India. If the Directors dare take such a step, woe be to them, for I am pursuing measures so manifestly to the nation's honour, and the Company's advantage, that envy and malice themselves will not dare to enter the lists against us.

"Was I to enter into a detail of all our transactions in these parts, volumes would not suffice. To Mr. Walsh, therefore, I refer you, who will be perfectly informed of the great and glorious things we have already done for this Company; too great, indeed, for such a Company. I shall only say, that such a scene of anarchy, confusion, bribery, corruption, and extortion was never seen or heard of in any country but Bengal; nor such and so many fortunes acquired in so unjust and rapacious a manner. The three provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, producing a clear revenue of 3,000,000*l.* sterling, have been under the absolute management of the Company's servants, ever since M^{rs} Jaffier's restoration to the subaship; and they have, both civil and military, exacted and levied contributions from every man of

power and consequence, from the Nabob down to the lowest zemindar.

“The trade has been carried on by free merchants, acting as gomastahs to the Company’s servants, who, under the sanction of their names, have committed actions which make the name of the English stink in the nostrils of a Gentoo or a Mussulman; and the Company’s servants themselves have interfered with the revenues of the Nabob, turned out and put in the officers of the government at pleasure, and made every one pay for their preferment.”

It may be questioned whether any of Clive’s many and great achievements called forth more of that active energy and calm firmness for which he was distinguished, than was evinced in effecting the reform of the civil service of Bengal. It created a host of enemies in India, several of whom were men of talent, and possessed both of wealth and reputation. These, when they returned to England, gave vent to their indignation against one whom they represented as an arbitrary tyrant, who, having made his own immense fortune in a rapid manner, now desired to obtain fame by depriving others of the same advantages. They found, among the Directors and the House of Commons, many who listened eagerly to their grievances, and to accusations against a man whose fame and fortune made him

an object of envy and of calumny; and who, besides the numbers he had rendered his enemies, by detecting and exposing their nefarious conduct, had deeply offended others, of whose character and principles he had a better opinion, by his impatience at their weak or undecided conduct. Born, it may be said, to command, clear in his views of what was right, and devoted to the public service, he was not only uncompromising, but impatient of check or hinderance in the pursuit of objects he deemed essential for the good name or interests of his country. This impatience led him too often to evince indignation or contempt of those who opposed him, or whose minds could not keep pace with his own, but whose conduct and character merited more justice and consideration.

But we must close this chapter, the events detailed in which occurred within a twelvemonth of Clive's arrival in Bengal. The second year afforded him a still greater opportunity of displaying his wisdom and courage.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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